

Interview with
EVAN ERASTMUS COOPER

February 6, 1969

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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EVAN ERASTMUS COOPER

Evan Erastmus Cooper was interviewed on February 6, 1969 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, Nevada, Arizona [and] Wyoming.

FH: Would you please give your full name?

EC: My name is Evan Erastmus Cooper.

FH: How do you spell your second name?

EC: [It is spelled] E-R-A-S-T-M-U-S.

FH: That is a spelling I have not heard before. What is your birth date?

EC: I was born February 14, 1915.

FH: [Where were] you born?

EC: I was born in the little town of Washington [City, Washington County, Utah].

FH: What was your father's name?

EC: My father was Erastmus William Cooper.

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

EC: [Her name was] Florence (Averett) Cooper.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: What do you remember from your early childhood?

EC: About my first recollection of life and my surroundings was [of] my folks living on a ranch south of Washington on the banks of the Virgin River. The ranch belonged to a man by the name of C. F. Foster or Charles Franklin Foster. My father worked there for wages and [we] lived there in a little red sand rock house. I remember playing on the river bank with my older sister, Winnie [Cooper], and an uncle of mine. [He] was not too much older than my sister [and] spent a lot of his life with my parents. We had to haul water from the little town of Washington [City] to drink, wash the dishes, cook and [do the] laundry. I remember the trips to town and back with the horses and wagon [with] barrels of water.

FH: Was this a good water supply at that time?

EC: It was dipped out of the ditches and was what everyone used. Most of the farmers who lived in the [Washington] Fields went to the spring and dipped [the water] out. People who lived in town dipped it out of the ditch that ran in front of their house. They had what they called [the] “dip-water-hour” every morning. They had a big waterhole in front of their house rocked up. When the water came down they dipped [the] water and filled their drinking barrels [with] enough [water] to [use] until the next morning. The [fellow] above might be watering his horses while the [fellow] below was [getting his] drinking water. [Laughter]

FH: [Inaudible] What was your uncle’s name?

EC: His name was Harry Averett. My mother’s father [James Washington Averett] died of what was called, at that time, Delamar Dust. It is known as silicosis today. He worked in the gold mill in Delamar, Nevada and contracted this disease. Particles [from the mine] dropped in his lungs and cut his lungs to pieces. He left a family of six small children. My mother [was the] next to the oldest [child and] she [was] married. My grandmother [Margaret (Alexander) Averett] would have to go away to work [and Harry] spent a lot of his time living with us. He was only three or four years older than my older sister, Winnie.

FH: There were quite a few men in this area that had this trouble [disease].

EC: I have heard my mother say there were forty or fifty widows left in Washington [City] and St. George. Delamar Dust is what [the disease] was called then.

FH: Is there more you would like to tell about this [time] of [your] life or would you like to tell about [your education] now?

EC: I must have been about five years old when my folks moved away from the farm. My dad stayed there long enough to acquire his own nice team of horses and a wagon and harness. [With that], a young man was well-equipped to make a living for his family [in those days]. They also had acquired a house and four lots in the town of Washington [City] which my mother still owns. They moved to town [and] we were all in this home. The rest of the children were born there. I was not born there. We went to school from there, starting [in] the first grade. There wasn’t [any] kindergarten.

My first teacher was a girl by the name of Katharine Miles. Katharine Miles later married [Andrew] Karl Larsen who is quite a historian here in St. George. She taught me in the first and second grades. In the fourth grade I was taught by a cousin of hers, Annie Miles, who later married Kenton Fuller. [She was] a very good teacher. I always had a lot of respect for her. Both of them were good teachers.

While I was in the first and second grades, one of the things that was outstanding in my mind was there were only three boys in the first and second grades: myself, Floyd Sandberg and Lavar Nielsen. [I was] a little taller than the other two [and] they always referred to us as the “Billy Goat Gruffs.” I was the large Billy Goat Gruff and the other two boys [laughter] were the middle size and the small Billy Goat Gruff. We used to play the little game that was in the reader, *Billy Goat Gruff*.

We went on to the fourth grade and I was taught by Linda Larsen who is the elementary school coordinator here in [Washington] County now. She taught me in the fourth grade and I assume it was along about her [early] teaching years. At that time, it was not uncommon for a student to be retained [or] sometimes put back [or ahead] one grade. It was in the fourth grade where I left these two boys, [my] companions. They were retained in the fourth grade and I went on to the fifth. There were only two girls, besides myself, who went on, that were in the group that [first] started. The rest of them were retained and a few of them were put back from the fifth to the fourth [grade].

Victor Iverson was the teacher [for] the fifth and sixth grades. Victor was just starting out [as a] school [teacher]. I remember he worried the devil out of me because I was [of] a serious nature. One of the first things he said when we started school was, “We will try you for six weeks. If you cannot make it, back you go!” [Laughter] He could not have done anything worse to me than to have said that because it would have been terrible for me to have been put back [and not] retained. I was serious and tried to put forth my best foot. I went on to the fifth grade and sixth grade under Victor.

He taught me and he taught my wife in the fifth and sixth grades. He taught all of my children, except Nola [Cooper], in the fifth and sixth grade. [Laughter] He spent all his lifetime teaching years in Washington [City] except [for] one [year]. He later turned out to be a remarkable teacher. His methods changed and the children learned to love him. My [children] loved him as a teacher. I think the world of him, myself, even though he worried me then. It might have been for a good cause, but then it seemed like a terrible obstacle.

At that time, you graduated from the sixth grade [and] went into the seventh [grade]. There were two grades taught in each room in the old Red Rock School House in Washington [City]. Israel Nielsen taught me in the seventh and eighth grades. He was a fine teacher to me. I was not an outstanding student in three [subjects], but I made average or better [grades] in history, geography and arithmetic. I loved them all. He used to make the remark that swelled me up, if I happened to be out a day from history or geography, that the class was dead. I could remember everything that I read and I had a keen memory then. He used to call on us to make oral reports on the chapter of history or geography. I was capable of doing this and he evidently [thought so too] because he used to make this statement.

When I graduated from the eighth grade, it was not compulsory to go on to school, but I had the desire for an education. I was out of school for a couple of years. The [Great] Depression came along and I did not get much support from my parents or much encouragement because they could not [help me]. They did not have anything to encourage me with. I made a little money one summer on a crop of sugar beet seed. I could not think of anything better to do with this money than to go to school.

Dixie College was part high school and part college at that time. It was four years of high school and one year of college at that time. They used wood and coal. We had to have transportation. The transportation fee for the winter on the school bus was \$35.00. I hauled wood from the Pine Valley Mountain with a team of horses to pay [for] my tuition and transportation. By doing that, I could spread my money out and make it reach through the ninth and tenth grades for books, clothes and [supplies].

FH: [Did] you stop [your education at] the tenth grade?

EC: Yes.

FH: In your growing-up years did you [receive] a call for military service?

EC: Yes. I was married, had three children [and] was farming. There was not so much pressure on farmers. As time went on, due to the fact that I did not own my farm — I was renting — I was called in for a physical checkup, passed and was classed A-1 at age twenty-nine.

FH: Had you ever had a physical examination [during] your life?

EC: I had never had a physical examination in my life. We were always a little skeptical or frightened of doctors. The only time you went to the doctor was when you were about ready to die. I do not know why we feared them but we did. There was a certain amount of fear attached to going to a doctor.

I went up for my physical on the fourth of February. [That] day there were 500 boys at Fort Douglas [Salt Lake County, Utah] for physical examinations. I passed. Due to the fact that I had a lot of stock and [had] a little changing to do to prepare to go, I thought if I was sure going to be called I would have to find out about when. So I went to the draft board and asked them about how much time I had before I would be called. They told me I would have about sixty days.

I began selling cows, disposing of things and preparing my family to leave them. I did not get my call. I had a sister [Winnie] living in Henderson, Nevada, so I went there and applied for a job. I [was hired] on the guard force there. My call did not come through until the eighth of July. I was to report in Fort Douglas on the twenty-sixth of July. We moved home from Nevada. We had a home here in St.

George and we moved [there to] get the family settled. In the meantime, they changed the age limit from thirty [years] to twenty-nine [years]. They called me up and told me my call had been cancelled. I have always regretted, to a certain extent, that I did not get to go. Not that I would have ever cared to have stood up and shot anyone, but I was interested in medicine. I felt like if I could have [been assigned to a] field of medics, I could have been of service to humanity. I believe, at heart, I am about half-humanitarian. I felt that I could get into nursing or maybe get some [education] where I might [have been] able to study medicine and be of use to humanity. I maintain that I would have been of more service helping to save lives with [inaudible] than if I had gone in.

FH: What did [you do to] prepare for your life's work?

EC: After The [Great] Depression I worked for the City of St. George. They were entertaining the idea of putting in a municipal power system. I had a team of horses up here in the mountains cleaning out [a] ditch. An engineer came along one day and commented on the team. They were a nice team and he said, "Are you interested in hiring them out?" It shows you how things come about. I told him yes, but I would sooner go with them myself. I did not like everybody to drive them. He said, "I do not blame you for that. We are going to build a penstock here for St. George's municipal power system. I can see we will need a team to pull the welder around. All the pipes will be welded." He took my telephone number and address. I came on back home and forgot about it. In about two weeks he called and asked me if I would be interested in going to work for them single-handed [alone]. I told him, "Yes."

I went up to work helping to distribute the pipe. I had only worked for a few days and he wanted to know if he could come down and see me. I said, "Yes, our home is always open." I did not have any idea what he wanted. When he came, he said, "I would like to have you take that crew up there and run them." I said, "Oh golly, I do not know anything about running [managing] men." He said, "You have quite a way with people. I feel like you do a fine job and there is more money in it." [This] was tempting to me. So I took the crew and ran them.

We built the penstock there which was about two mile of pipe line. I think there were 5,590 feet of pipe. It started in at a sixteen-inch pipe at the head and was forced to an inch and three-quarter nozzle at the end. It turned quite a turbine then. All [of the] pipe was put in a very rugged country. A lot of it [had] rattlesnakes in with [the] horses. The pipes weighed about 1,600 pounds per joint and it was quite a project. I ran the crew there for him until we completed the penstock. His name was Walter Carnell. He said, "I am going to recommend you to Strand Electric if you are interested in working for them." I said, "Who is Strand Electric?" He said, "They have the contract for building the power line, taking down the old line and putting up the new one in St. George."

I went to work for them. I had only been working for them about two weeks when the superintendent, a man by the name of Delbert Rolands from Springdale [Washington County, Utah], called me one morning. He said, "Evan, I would like to have you take part of this crew and run them." They were working about thirty-five men. I said, "I do not want to do that. My dad and my father-in-law are both working for you. [Laughter] I do not want to be bossing them around." He said, "You know everybody in town and you get along with the people. I feel like you could do us a lot of good and do a good job." So I took part of the crew and ran them. We dug all the holes and raised better than 2,700 poles in this town by hand, trimmed all the right of ways, and ran the line up to the penstock which was about eight miles.

It was there that I [had] a lot of training in building the power lines. "Sam" [Strand] took quite a liking to me and I went away and worked on a number of jobs for him. [I] helped build fifty-two miles of line from Rocks, Nevada to Caliente [Nevada] along the railroad track, which is a very rugged country. I ran a bunch of men over there. In fact, I did all the hiring for him. He liked these Dixie fellows. He said they were all good workers. The biggest part of his force I hired from St. George, Washington [City], Hurricane [Washington County, Utah and] as far [away] as Rockville [Washington County, Utah].

Then I helped him build another line from Bunkerville [Nevada] to Littlefield [Arizona]. Then I went to work for W. [Wilford] W. Cannon. I was his foreman. They built a lot of REA [Rural Electrification Administration] lines. We built sixty-two miles of REA line in Bridger Valley, Wyoming. I moved my family [to] Bridger Valley [for] one summer. We built thirty-two miles of REA line clear throughout the Washington Fields [Washington County, Utah]. We built eighteen miles of line from Glendale, Nevada clear down to the end of Moapa Valley [Nevada].

FH: You naturally fell into this.

EC: Yes. I loved it! It was rugged work and I did put everything on the job. In running men, I always felt I would not ask a man to do something that I would not do myself. So I climbed poles, tied wires and dug holes. I used to love to raise poles by hand with what they called the pike and the ginny [a tripod used to raise the poles]. It was quite an art. If you could get about five men who would work together and [they became] used to raising them, it was quite an art. [Because I was] strong and vigorous, I used to get quite a kick out of showing off my power. Not that I was any stronger than a lot of the [fellows], but there was a little knack in raising those poles on a ginny. It is a little nudge and I could knock [nearly] any two men on their rump raising those poles. It was a push more than a lift. I loved the work! The time went by rapidly because there were a variety of things to do, always changes [and] always little problems to solve. That is why I liked it.

FH: [Was it] always a challenge?

EC: A challenge, that is right. M. S. Strand was a great skier and a Norwegian. He was born and raised in Norway. He liked me and told me that if I would come and go with him, that I had a job with him [for] as long as I wanted. I loved this country here and I was away from home a lot on construction [jobs]. I am a family man. I loved my family and I wanted to be with them. I was gone all week, two weeks or a month at a time. I did not go for [that]. I would sooner have a little less [money] and be home than to have more and be away from home.

FH: Were you active in [The] Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] during your growing-up years?

EC: [I was] quite active. I was not as active as I would have liked to have been during my growing-up years. It seems as though in the little ward in Washington [City] there were a few [who] were outstanding. I do not know how anyone else could get to be outstanding because they never really had a chance to pass the sacrament and [activities] like that. I felt a little like some of us [boys] were underprivileged or left out.

I have always been god-fearing. I have always loved to be active. I suppose I was along about nineteen or twenty [years old when] I was president of the Young Men's Mutual [Improvement Association]. Wallace Iverson became bishop there [and] asked me to be president of the Young Men's Mutual. I accepted and loved every minute of it. At that time, each organization was responsible for its own finances. This gave me an opportunity to cultivate some of my desires in drama. Our main means of recreation in the ward we made ourselves and drama was one of them. It was not uncommon for us to put on two, three or four three-act plays and several one-act plays throughout the winter. We did it for recreation. We derived finances from these efforts in the MIA [Mutual Improvement Association by] putting on these plays and charging \$.25 a ticket. Most [of the time] we had a packed house.

One time, while I was in the Mutual, we put on a little opera called *The Toreadors*. It was a Spanish setting. We invited the stake officers over to see this and they were so taken up with it that they [had] us play it two nights in St. George. We rented the costumes from [the] Salt Lake Costume House. It was really a hit. I have pictures of the main cast.

FH: Did you take one of the leads in that [opera]?

EC: Yes. Mrs. [Aggie] Sproul and her husband [Maynard] helped direct it. Three of her boys played in it [along with] Quentin Nisson. Quentin, by the way, was one of my counselors in the MIA. Quentin Nisson is a keeper of the store Nisson [Mercantile] over [in] Washington [City]. He was also the bishop while they built the new chapel there.

We had a lot of fun. Also, another means of revenue was dancing. We had a lot of dances throughout the winter. We charged [for] a ticket [to the dances]. [The group] responsible for [putting on] the dance received the finances. Our treasury always had [some] money to [use]. I liked that method better than our method today, the budget plan.

FH: We miss a lot of opportunity to produce.

EC: You bet!

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: You [said you participated] in all of the church organizations. Did you come up through the priesthood?

EC: Yes, I am an elder now.

FH: Have you done missionary work?

EC: The only missionary work that I have done has been down at the Bureau of Information at the [St. George] Temple. The last two summers I have spent down at the Bureau of Information and I have enjoyed it very much. It is very interesting [and] you meet a lot of people. I feel like that I am a weak missionary because I am not as well-learned as I should be or could be, but I love to meet the people. I love history and I lean a little more towards the actual history of the church than a lot of the missionaries do. I find also, and I do not know how you feel about this, but that the history of this church, especially the temple and the colonization of Utah, is a good lead in getting people interested in the background of the church.

FH: You are well-qualified — especially in this area.

EC: I love it, especially around here, because I have known a lot of the people who have gone on, but who were actually instrumental in [the] pioneering of this area and the irrigation systems.

FH: You have grown up with it and so you know all about it. You have an advantage over some of the rest of us here. What do you remember about your father?

EC: My father was a likeable man. He was not as large as I am. He only weighed about 165 [pounds]. I think about the most he said he ever weighed was 170 pounds. My father was left an orphan [when he was] six weeks old. I should not say an orphan. His father [James Monroe Rollins Cooper] died. My dad's father was only thirty-one years old [when] he lifted a wagon box and hurt his arm. At the time, he was ranching in Pine Valley [Washington County, Utah]. He was in Washington [City] at the time he hurt his arm. My grandmother [Rasmenia

(Iverson) Cooper] said she tried to get him not to leave until he knew how it [the injury] was going to turn out. He left to go to Pine Valley and died that night up at Chad's Ranch above Veyo [Washington County, Utah]. They think it was blood poisoning.

My father was only six weeks old and my grandmother had two other little boys. They were just fifteen months apart — Jim first, Sherman second and then my father. After four or five years, she married a man by the name of Robert Covington and had one child, Bert Covington, who lives here in St. George now. My father grew up with very little education, but he was a hard worker and had a fairly good head on him. He was very good [doing] mathematics in his head. He could figure out a problem in his head about as quickly as most people could on paper.

He chose farming for his career. He married my mother when they were around eighteen or nineteen years old. He farmed and freighted with horses and [a] wagon. He was a good teamster. He loved and drove fine horses. He would not have a horse that was not good to pull. If he broke one, it was always good to pull. To my father and mother were born eight children.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

EC: I have a sister [Winnie] who is a little more than five years older than I am. Then the rest of the children came about two years apart. I have two brothers and then two sisters, a brother and a sister. My father provided for us as well as anyone at that time. He died [December 16, 1954 in St. George] at the age of sixty-five [from] a heart attack.

FH: Tell about your mother.

EC: My mother was about eight years old [when] her father died. She has been a wonderful mother. Her father was ill a long time before he passed away [and] it exhausted about all they had accumulated to live on and to dope [medicate] him until he passed on. Somehow, in the growing-up years, my mother developed an inferiority complex or she felt that other people were better than they were, not because they were better, but I guess because they were better clothed. They had to work hard for a living doing janitorial work and they had to haul their wood.

My [maternal] grandmother never remarried again. She provided as well as she could for them. But my mother developed this inferiority complex and she seemed to not be able to cope with it as time went on. She passed it on to many of [her] children and gave us the idea that other children were better than we were, even though she and my father provided as good a home or average home for their family. I would say lots of times [it was a] better than an average living. Before cars came along, he drove a nice buggy [with] nice harnesses and nice horses. We went for a ride on Sunday which was mostly the means of recreation

and family entertainment. We had plenty to eat and plenty to wear. When cars came along, we always had a car, but still she could not accept the fact that we were an average family. I do not think anyone should feel that they are better than anyone else unless they do better, but we were an average family. It was passed on to us, especially me, until I became older and began to realize what was happening to me. I do not know how the other children feel about it.

It was here that Mrs. Sproul entered into the picture, Aggie Sproul, who later divorced and married Herbert Mill. She was a wonderful person. She had a wonderful outlook on life [and] was talented in many fields. She was talented in music, drama, in singing and instrumental music. She had a good education and a lot of understanding. She understood people. She came to my rescue and really helped me by talking to me. During The [Great] Depression years, she and her husband were on what they called an unemployed school teacher's program. They used to give night classes in music and drama. I took some of the leading parts in some of their plays. I am sure they gave me the leading parts to help me. With her coaching and talking too, it helped me a lot. It helped me to overcome my self-conscious inferior attitude towards people and what people thought [of me].

I remember the first play that I ever took a part in was called *Stop Thief*. I played the part of a kleptomaniac. It was a leading part. All the audience would come up to the stage like they usually did after a little town play and offer their compliments. Most of them would come and tell me I stole the show. Later, I played the part of an absent-minded professor. I also played the part in a little three-act play they called *The Poor Married Man*. I played the part of the poor married man which was quite a scream, a three-act comedy. It was her help and counsel, and I am sure the parts they gave me in these little plays, [that] helped me a lot to overcome this inferiority complex that I felt was passed on from mother.

My mother was a wonderful mother. She was a good cook, a good seamstress and very economical. My father could have never done for us children what he did if he had not had the kind of a wife he had. All of us were practically grown before we ever had what we called a store-bought shirt. She made them [all]. My sisters were up in their teens before they ever had a store-bought dress. She made their dresses. A lot of them were made out of older clothes, but they always looked nice. She was an excellent seamstress. She could darn trousers and [clothes] until her hands [were] so shaky [that] she could not [do it] anymore. You could hardly tell where the hole was. She could take a dozen eggs and a pan of milk and make a wholesome meal for our family.

My job around home helping my mother was on wash day to cook and punch the clothes. We had an old puncher. Some of them bought punchers [from] the store but ours was a homemade one. It was a big gallon pan put up over the end of a board and nailed there [with] holes punched all through. It had sort of a suction. The first method of washing was to fill the black tub, the kettle they called it,

outside and build a fire around it. After the water [became] hot they dipped part of the water out and put it in the scrub tub. Then they put the clothes in the tub [with] the homemade soap and the lye. First, they put the lye in the water and a scum came [to] the top. They skimmed this scum off. I think the purpose of the lye was to soften the water. Then they would cut up the homemade soap in thin threads and put it in the water. After this dissolved, they would put the clothes in and then we would punch with this puncher. I walked a million miles around the black tub punching these clothes with suction! Then they took the handle of the punch and sort these clothes out of the hot water and put them over in the scrub tub [where] they scrubbed them, rinsed them and hung them [to dry].

On wash day my job, among the older children, was to help my mother to wash and to punch the clothes and get the family dinner. She was a regular [organized] person and that is one good thing she passed on to me was a system, something I have tried to impress on my children.

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EC: Our meals were always regular. At seven o'clock in the morning we had our family breakfast. The chores had to be done before seven o'clock. We had to have the cows milked, the horses fed, the pigs fed and we were washed and ready to come to breakfast. We always had our family blessing on the food. That is another tradition I hate to see die out of the American family. The regular meal time and the family blessing seemed to regulate and start the day off with regularity. Our dinner was always ready shortly after twelve o'clock [noon]. In the evening we had our evening meal around six o'clock. Then the dishes were done and we always had visiting. Neighbors came to visit or we went to visit neighbors. That was another old tradition in the rural areas because there were no movies, there were no cars to go [anywhere].

FH: Was this [your] social life?

EC: That was [our] social life. Some of my fondest memories were when either my mother's mother or my father's mother would come to visit us in the evening. Oftentimes my dad would say, "Come on. Let us walk up to ma's," which was about three blocks away. We would walk up and spend the evening or [go] up to another little old couple's place by the name of Uncle Estes and Aunt Libby Iverson. Then it was called Everson, but it was really Iverson, but everybody called him Estes Everson. On their little pull-on porch, a very humble home, were several settees, or seats, out of old horse drawn coaches. They were white and [there was] room for two [to sit]. In the spring, summer and fall, when you would want to be sitting outside, they always had flowers, rose bushes and shrubs. He was quite artistic in pruning shrubs in various ways. It was a pleasure to go to their place and spend the evening. They were very friendly.

My mother's younger brother [Harry Averett], who later lived with us, used to come after milk for their cereal at our place after they quit keeping a cow. He and my dad would have a lot of fun matching wits and wisecracking. They would keep the whole house laughing. [They were very] interesting and fun evenings. You did not want to leave home. You wanted to stay home to be a part of it.

FH: How many children were in your folks' family?

EC: [They had] eight [children] — four boys and four girls.

FH: Would you name them?

EC: My oldest sister is named Winnie [Cooper]. Winnie is married to a man by the name of Pratt Prince. They live in Henderson, Nevada. He has a barber shop and a beauty salon in Henderson, Nevada. He came from the town of New Harmony [Washington County] Utah up here about thirty-five miles.

[Then there was] myself at about five years younger.

Kay [Cooper] is now about forty-nine years old and has never married. He lives with my mother over in Washington [City].

Then there is Cleave [Cooper]. I will never forget when he was born. He was born on Thanksgiving Day, the twenty-fourth day of November. My dad and a man by the name of Joe Turnbull were still making molasses. Then it was called Dixie Sorghum. He was born in the night. I do not remember anything about him being born, but the next morning ma had the baby. I was so tickled to think she had a baby. I went up and down one street in Washington [City] and told everybody in town that ma had a baby last night. I was [very] thrilled to think that she had a baby and his birthday has come about three times [on Thanksgiving Day] the twenty-fourth of November. He is now forty-seven years old. .

I have a sister, Leona [Cooper], next who is married to a man by the name of Max Hinton. Max originated from LaVerkin [Washington County] Utah. They also live in Henderson, Nevada. He is sergeant [at] the fire department in Henderson. He has been [there] since he came out of the [military] service. They have one child. She is grown, married and has two children.

Then my sister, Wanda [Cooper], is married to a man by the name of Homer Gibson. He came from Hurricane [Washington County, Utah] but they live in Henderson, Nevada also.

Then I have a brother named Denny [Cooper]. Denny looks a lot like me. He has had a lot of tragedy in his life. On the twenty-third of December he was going to Hurricane with a couple of friends. They [had a] wreck going down into what they call Purgatory [Flats] and it killed the boy [who] was driving the car,

Douglas Sproul. The other one died, Gene Riding, a few days later. My brother was the only survivor. I think the only reason he was the only survivor is [because] he was riding in the middle [of the front seat]. It broke his leg. I thought when they called me out there [that] his eye had [been] torn clear out of his head, but it had not. It was the white of his eye showing through the mass of blood running down his face. I was about the second or third one [to get] there. He was in the [military] service at the time and home on furlough. When he [was] over that [injury], it left him a little lame.

A little less than two years ago [1967], on Halloween night, he wrapped the car around a tree down here on Main Street in St. George. It took them thirty-five minutes to cut him out with a blow torch. They never had any idea he was alive when they cut him out. The [first accident] was too much speed, but this one here was a freak accident. One brake in his car grabbed and I think he had an emergency arise there and threw the brake on not thinking about this brake that grabbed and it threw him into the tree.

Then I have a baby sister, Nola [Cooper]. Nola is married to a man by the name of Gene Adams. They live in Vernal [Uintah County] Utah. They have three children. He works for the Bureau of Land Management supervising the office in Vernal.

FH: Have you had any faith-promoting experiences in your life?

EC: The most faith-promoting experience in my life I suppose was when I was a child. We never thought much about faith as a hardship that these people endured. As I have grown older, I think how sound their faith must have been to endure what they endured. My dad and mother were poor and their parents were poor, yet they never wavered. They never asked for a donation for any public or any church fund that they did not go to the bitter end to support. I know they went without some of the necessities to pay their dues. You never heard them complain as we do now when things are much easier.

I have lived with my mother's mother a lot, my grandmother [Margarette Averett]. Her tithing was one of the most essential things in her life. Even though her income was very meager, I used to say, "Grandma, I do not think you owe tithing." She [would] said, "Oh yes, I do. You bet I do." She would reprimand me for feeling that way about it. My mother is the same. She always felt like fast offerings and tithing were one of the big necessities of life. I have often felt, that if my folks had been a little more religiously inclined in a way, [they] would have encouraged me to go on a [LDS] mission. I really would have liked to have gone on a mission. The Washington Ward, the one I grew up in, went for years and years and years without ever sending a missionary out.

FH: This was the time of The Great Depression. It made a big difference

EC: That is right. It made a vast difference. There was not a missionary sent out of Washington Ward until World War II came along. I am sure if [my parents] had not been faithful and believed in the church, that possibly they would have done things differently.

FH: [Did] you grow up in an atmosphere of faith?

EC: Yes. However, religion was never pushed on to us. My folks never used to say, "You have to do this or else this will happen to you." We never lived in the world of superstition like a lot of parents. [Some people] say, "If you do not do this or if this happens to you, it is because you have not lived right." My folks never were that way. My folks always told me to do what I knew was right. "You know what is right and what is wrong."

FH: Has music meant a lot to you?

EC: I love music, even though what I know about music I have taught myself. I play the piano a little and there are not many [instruments] that I pick up [that] I cannot get a little music out of. If they have some night classes at the school [and] I am getting to where I would have a little time, I would like to go and take a couple of music [classes] for my own good. Music was so easy for me. Before I was married [and] involved in [so] many responsibilities, I could hear a record or a [player] piano roll or a song that I liked, [and] I could come home and pick it out [in] the piano with very little trouble.

As far as studying music, I have never had a chance. I love to sing. I sing at lots of funerals. I love to sing both parts. Not that I have any outstanding voice, but I do get asked to sing in funerals a lot. I have gone up to Henrieville [Garfield County, Utah], Parowan [Iron County, Utah], Paragonah [Iron County, Utah], New Harmony and Cedar City [Iron County, Utah to] sing [at] funerals. Possibly it is through the nursing home here that I get a lot of these [requests]. When they have any entertainment there, the old folks usually insist on me singing a song or two. I love music, no kidding about it. I would give anything in the world if I had had the chance my children have had and wasted it [on] music.

FH: Maybe it was too easy and they did not appreciate it.

EC: That is right. My oldest daughter [Margarette] has a beautiful voice. She could have really gone to town on the piano because her fingering and timing were a natural for her. She would have done a lot with her voice, but her husband resents it, so she does not.

FH: Have you enjoyed reading?

EC: I used to enjoy reading a lot more than I do now. As far as enjoying reading, I enjoy reading now, but I retained a lot more in years gone by. I used to love to

read novels. I guess as you get older you do not retain it. I do not retain as much now as I used to. I think you have to get in the groove to study, to learn and to have [information] stay with you. I can be reading the *Reader's Digest* and my mind will be off in the south [part] of the rest home. [Laughter] I read a few novels and some of the books that I liked best. I suppose the church would condemn a little bit. I truly enjoyed [the] John Doyle Lee book [*Mountain Meadows Massacre*] by Juanita Brooks. It gave me a lot more insight of John D. Lee. I cannot help but think that John D. Lee was a very instrumental person, a very valuable person in our church. I have read *The Giant Joshua* [by Maureen Whipple], the *Children of God* by Otis Fisher, *The Brave Saints* and *For This My Glory* by [Paul D.] Bailey. As far as making me feel hard toward the church over these books, it has strengthened my faith because actually they just presented the human side of the Mormon people to me.

FH: Tell about your courtship and marriage.

EC: My wife's father [Orman Lamond Wilkins] was raised in Washington [City]. When he was about seventeen years old, they moved by horse and wagon out into the Uintah Basin [Utah]. I believe my wife's father said they were twenty-five days [on the road]. They went with two wagons and eight head of cows. They drove them from Washington [City] to Roosevelt [Duchesne County, Utah]. He married my mother-in-law, Mildred Murray, out there. When my wife [Glenna Fern (Wilkins) Cooper] was about ten years old, according to them, she had a heart condition. The doctor suggested that they come down to a lower altitude for her health. They came to Washington [City because] that was where he was raised and they knew it was warm.

When she was about sixteen years old, we started going together. She was seventeen [years old] when we were married and I was not quite twenty-two [years old]. They lived, at the time, out on the same farm that my folks lived on when I was a baby — in the same house. I used to tell him that [when] he irrigated on the soil [that] was to keep me out. When you irrigated you could not get in, only a foot [or so] and then you had to take your shoes off and wade in because of the mud. [Laughter] We were married on October 11, [1938]. When we were married we had \$25.00. We stayed about eight days with her folks. We moved over here [to] the west part of St. George. I might say, from the time we were married until we moved to ourselves, we had spent our money down to \$7.05. We paid the rent on two rooms which was \$7.00 and we only had \$.05; so we bought a bar of Fels Naphtha Soap with that.

It was in 1938 when things were really rough. I did anything I could get to do. I even gathered up pop bottles for a few cents. We [had] a cow and I would work for hay and we would get a little milk. The next spring after we were married, they started to build this JCPenney building here and, shortly after, the Sprouse-Reitz building. David [Orin] Woodbury had the contract. Another [fellow] and I, [who] married about the same time, [received] a contract to get out the sand and

the gravel. We went up to the [Shivwits] Indian farm and got sand and gravel for this building for \$1.50 a half-a-yard delivered down here. He had a little truck and I had a team of horses. I scraped the [sand and gravel] and we rigged up a screw on a bin on a conveyor, quite an invention. We [had] an old Chevrolet motor and the motor ran these buckets on this conveyor belt and elevated it up there. We had a screen up here with a shaker on it. We segregated the darn [sand and gravel] three ways. The sand and the [very] coarse [gravel] went over and the sand went in one bin and the gravel in another.

That was the first job of any value that amounted to much. The next fall I rented a farm from a man down here. I took a few beatings in the first years of our married life. We moved out there on the farm and, in the meantime, we had a baby arrive. I worked like a darn horse there. It was all horse-power and I plowed and scraped and planted grain and alfalfa. We moved there in August. I had the place looking beautiful in the winter or [by] late fall. I had grain way up [to] here and alfalfa to the third leaf. He rented me this farm and fifteen head of cows and heifers. The heifers were all old enough to breed and they were all bred. We thought we could see prosperity.

One day, I was down irrigating and a car drove up the lane. A man got out and came up through the field with his books and some papers. He was a man by the name of Bayless working for the Farm Security Administration. He said, "What are you doing here, Evan?" I told him what happened. He said, "My goodness, he should not have done that to you. We have a mortgage on the crops and increase of these cows and this farm. He knew it." There I had worked and put all that work in there. He was not able to pay me a dime when I moved away. I had to move away because there was no way we could solve it. This old boy was in debt head over heels to [the] Farm Security [Administration].

I moved to town and we rented a place [for] \$12.00 and we only had \$11.00. The lady [who] owned the home let us clean it up for the other dollar. We cleaned the place up and moved in there. I had a wife, a baby, two cows and a team of horses. In the meantime, we had taken on an orphan [boy]. He was not an orphan, but this ten-year-old boy and his mother could not get along and she chased him off. He came and wanted us to take him in so we took him in. He lived with us a long time.

Then I landed a job [at] Dick's Café. I told them that I would like to learn to cook. I washed dishes for three days and he put me over on the grill at night. I guess it was these wash days with my mother that gave me a little incentive to cook.

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

EC: — victim for the Big Hand [Café] for a long time. I farmed on the side until I started working on the power lines. In the back of my mind, I always had desire to be of service to humanity. In-so-much as I had passed up education, I decided that

there was one of two things [I could do]: build a home for unwanted children or a home for what they called [an] old folks' home. They did not call them nursing homes. I guess this little boy [who] lived with us also was maybe instrumental in giving me this desire. I always had this desire and idea in the back of my head. On all these jobs that I worked [at], I still entertained this idea of someday doing this. [But] I never ran into any money or [had] any finances or any backing to where I could do it.

While I was cooking [at] Dick's Café we took in another little girl. We took in three little girls whose mother had a nervous breakdown. This also stimulated this desire to do this.

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EC: Their mother had a nervous breakdown and she had six children. I went down to their home. They were not religious [and] did not belong to the church. These six little children were sitting around an old heater in the room. There were bark and chips on the floor. It was really a fire trap. It made me chill to see them there and their hair all straggly, uncombed and unkempt. The dad was up town. I went up and reported it to the bishop and to the Relief Society president in our ward. I talked to their father. I said, "We can get some help for you." He said, "You discriminate." I said, "No. Naturally, the Mormon people look after their own, but they look after other people, too, if they are in need. I would like the bishop and the Relief Society president to go down [to your house]." So he consented. They went down and found a home for three of [the children] and we took three [children] for awhile. Our home [was] small and we had two children [Margarette and Avenna Gail]. [The father] decided he could handle two of them at home so we kept one of the little girls [who] needed us most, for awhile. This also stimulated the idea of a home for unwanted children.

I was still thinking of the old folks' home. In 1955, Mrs. [Addie Olivia] "Olive" [(Alger)] Truman came [looking for] me. She had heard that I was interested in this particular business so she [wanted] me to buy them out. I decided that, before I [went] into it lock, stock and barrel, I would try it out. I went in as a partnership with them for a year. Then she told me if I wanted it she would sell it to me [at a] [very] reasonable [price]. I had only been with them about six weeks. She and her husband [Thomas Herrover Truman] went to Texas. They [were] in a terrific car accident. It darn near killed them both and that threw [their] business. At that time, it was a large place [and] thirty-five patients [were] thrown into my lap. So I learned a lot in a hurry about operating a nursing home.

After a while they came back and were patients. Dr. [Wilford J.] Reichman and both the McGregor doctors [Alpine Watson and Milton Konrad] came to the nursing home. Evidently they had a lot of faith in me and my ability to handle the people there because I was granted my LPN license [Licensed Practical Nurse] through waiver on their recommendations which made me feel [very] good. I was

there with [the Trumans] for a year. Their foster son thought they were going to pass away and be out of the picture. He wanted to get things tied up in his favor, so he wanted to go in as my partner. I could see that he and I thought entirely differently about [how to] operate a nursing home. I told him when my lease was up I would discontinue my services and he could take it over.

In the meantime, I had a friend in Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah], Cleon Sproul, who [was] selling real estate. He had an aunt in Tucson, Arizona who had a nursing home. They were getting old, her husband was ill, and they wanted to sell. [I became] interested in this nursing home and we bought the nursing home and moved to Tucson. We were very successful in Tucson. It was a blessing in disguise for us to go there. We built up a good reputation. They used to call inquiring about our nursing home. They would say, "Are you that Mormon rest home operator? We hear you give your patients good care," which we did try to do. One thing that I felt always was the best advertisement in the world, in our business, was good food because the old people did not work. They did not get hungry. I always tried to see that they were well-fed and kept clean. I think that built our nursing home up there.

We kept our home in Washington [City] and, after we were [in Arizona] two years, my family wanted to come back up here to school. We had saved a little money. We [had] a chance to sell and make a little money on [the] deal. In the meantime, the Truman's foster son had fouled this place up. They wanted me to come back and buy them out. We had a chance to sell [in Arizona] so I came back.

While we had been down there, the [Utah] State Department of Health passed a law that you had to have an operator's license to operate a nursing home in the State of Utah. That was an obstacle in my road. I took the state board and missed by one percent on the first examination. The passing grade was seventy-five and I [had] seventy-four. That retarded [our] progress for a year. I had to wait a year before I could take the examination again. In the meantime, I bought [the Liberty] Café. We operated this café and the next spring I went up and took the [state board examination for an operator's] license and passed with flying colors. That gave me my operator's license and a LPN license.

We bought [a] half-interest in the Truman Nursing Home. At that time, it was in the big old home over on the corner, the old [Charles Franklin] Foster home in half [of] the existing building. It was four bedrooms, a living room and this new area they had built. But they [the Trumans] were getting old and they could not get any financing anywhere. They were up in their seventies and, naturally, no loan company wanted to put out any money. We had a few thousand dollars of our own so we bought [a] half-interest. I went down to the St. George Savings and Loan and they had enough faith in me to let us have some money along with a small business loan. We built the home that we now have over here which has been very good. I have been happy with it and I love the work.

FH: From my observations, I can see that you are a natural for this business. You generate love and respect in the people [who] are there. You are efficient and it works fine.

EC: I like it. That is the reason I have been successful in it. I really do love the work, not from terms of dollars and cents, but for being of service to humanity. Lots of operators would make dollars, but I do not make cents. I still have a conscience and a good feeling about my work and what I do for [the patients].

FH: Tell about your children.

EC: I have been a person who has loved children. I regretted that we have not had more children than we had. It is possibly our fault, possibly economical conditions around us, too, that my family possibly has been a planned family.

Margarette [Cooper] was our first blessing, and a blessing she was, a beautiful little girl when she came and has been all her life. She was very much loved and appreciated — a beautiful little girl. She grew up and [attended] her first years of school in St. George. We moved to Washington [City] and bought a home over there. Margarette graduated from the sixth grade there and then she came to St. George and went to the last year of high school. She loved to sing and had a beautiful voice. She had taken a little vocal training here. My wife's brother [Jerry Wilkins] lived in San Fernando, California and we let her go down there and finish her last year of high school [so she could] take vocal training under a teacher he knew there. He also had taken some training under her. She graduated from San Fernando High School in California.

In the meantime, we had moved to Tucson. We went over to her graduation and to [bring] her home. She had mixed emotions about [attending] college. I realized her disposition and condition [and] more or less insisted on her going to a vocational school or beautician school. I thought if I could [buy] a little time, she would wake up to the fact that she wanted to go to college. But, in the meantime, I [was] preparing her to provide a living for herself if she ever had to in her life. The first three months in beautician school, I felt, she more or less wasted, but then she took to it like a duck to water. She happened to be quite a natural hairdresser and her teachers praised her for it. [This] was something she needed. We all need it, but she especially needed this praise. She graduated from the Golden School of Beauty in Tucson with very high honors. After graduation, she worked in Tucson until we moved back to Utah.

In Tucson she had met a [man] by the name of William Stallings. He worked in a shirt store there and they fell in love. She moved with us back to Utah, but she thought she would like to practice in Nevada so she stayed with my sister [Winnie] in Nevada. She had enough hours in Arizona to get a license in Nevada, but she had to declare residency there. She stayed with my sister three months and

[received] her license to practice in Nevada. She did very well. Some of her hair styling was exhibited on television. She married “Bill” Stallings and they have four lovely children. They had five [children]. Their first child died when it was born, a lovely little boy. He would be eight years old now. She has four [living] children: Laurie, Lance, Tanya and William Cody is the baby. He was born last July. The oldest little boy, maybe we should mention his name, was Gerald.

They have a home here in St. George, but [“Bill”] has also been shortchanged in education. He is a very brilliant and very capable [young man]. They moved to Denver last August [and] he is going to electronics school there. I am happy to see him raise his standard of knowledge. I hope someday that they can move back here in the St. George area where we can be closer to them. Not that I want them in my back-door-yard, but I do love my family and would like to be close [enough] to them where I can visit with them once in awhile and see the grandchildren grow up.

Then Avenna Gail [Cooper] came about thirty months after Margarette. She is a lovely little gal — as much different as day and night from Margarette. I suppose Gail takes more after my side of the house, at least she says so. When they were [children], she used to say, “All the other [children’s] noses turn up like mama but mine turns down like daddy.” [Laughter] She was born in the St. George [Pioneer Memorial] Hospital. Her grade school [education] was in Washington [City] until she [was] out of sixth grade. She went to the Woodward High [in St. George until] we moved to Tucson. She went to Catalina High [School] down there.

Gail was a tomboy. She loved horses and loved the outdoors. The thing that used to thrill me about Gail was the fact that she loved life. She used to go with me to do the chores in the morning, down to the field in the fall of the year when I turned the cows in the fields. She would say, “Oh, it is good to be alive. I feel so thrilled.” She would throw her arms in the air. She has always been so thrilled to be alive. [She was] a real tomboy, a real horse girl. She could do anything with a horse. One thing that stands out most in my mind about Gail growing up and her tomboying was when I used to milk. She could milk a cow as good as I can. She could [do this] since she was a little tot.

I used to have a stock wheelbase Dodge truck. It [had] a four-speed transmission and, when I hauled hay, I put it in first gear. She could not reach the clutch, but when I would get ready to move the truck up, she would hop down and turn the key on and step on the starter and the old truck would start off. Then she would hop up in the seat and stand and steer the truck until it [went] down where it needed to be. Then she would get down and turn the key off again. She has always been very collected. When I would milk the cows, I used to have those half-tin gates. She could straddle the opening and the calf would come out. She would drop on the calf and she [could] slam the gate shut as the calf went by so it would lock the next calf in. She would buck and play and the calf would buck around until she fell off.

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EC: Then she would attempt the next calf. She had a horse that I [bought] for her. We called him "Flat". She could run him up the lane, fall off and the horse would stop and look down at her like he felt so bad she had fallen off. She would get up and get on him. [She would] get some [youngster who] did not know too much about riding: she would get on behind him, spank [the horse] and he would kick up and ring his tail and put on a rodeo for us. She loved horses. When I could not catch him she could go right by me, call him and he would come shaking his head up to her. She has broken quite a few horses to ride. She was a natural-born good handler of horses and cows and very self-reliant.

[There is] another incident I would like to mention in Gail's life. She and a group of children were playing around some transformer racks in Washington [City] which they should not have been doing. One little boy reached up and [took] a hold of the jumper wire and it knocked him out. He fell limp and was hanging to the wire. The rest of the children ran. She had presence of mind to reach up and get him by the pockets of the overalls and jerk him loose. Had she taken a hold of his body standing on the ground it would have killed them both. She had presence of mind enough to reach up and get him by the overall pockets and jerk him loose. She dragged him through the fence and then she ran to get his mother. I will never forget how shook up she was when she came home and told us about it. [She had] her mother go back with her to see how Richard was. It was Richard Williams. It burned his two fingers, the little finger and the one next to it. They were well wrecked.

FH: It is remarkable that she had presence of mind to do that.

EC: She is very remarkable. She has always been a person who did not panic in a crisis. Her patriarchal blessing tells her that she will be a healer of the sick and a very instrumental person among her fellowmen which, so far in her life, has proved to be very true.

Gail graduated from Brigham Young University [Provo, Utah County, Utah] with a bachelor's degree in her major: physical education. Her minor is history. About six months before she graduated from the 'Y,' Bishop [Archie] Tobler in Washington [City] presented her with the idea of going on a [LDS] mission. They talked to me about it and I discouraged the bishop from calling her at the time. I said, "She is within four months of graduating from the 'Y'. I am not thinking of this in terms of dollars and cents, but it might be a turning point in her life to where she might never graduate. Wait until after she graduates this spring and then call her if you want. I would be happy to have her go." [And] she did. She graduated and taught school [at] Ben Lomond High in Ogden [Weber County, Utah] for a year. The following September she went on a mission to the South British Mission in England [and] filled a very good mission. She was very

highly commended by the mission president. She was one of the first LDS missionaries in that area to be called a traveling sister. They had traveling elders, but they had not tried traveling sisters before. She and her companion were called as traveling sisters. They traveled from branch to branch for weeks. They showed up to help [others] organize and strengthen the weaker areas. I feel it was money well spent for her. She was in England for eighteen months.

She came home and taught school for a half-year in St. George. When she was married, she and her husband spent two years in Germany. He was in the [military] service. By the way, he was in the same mission as she was in England. His name is Hyrum Wayne Smith. He is a very close descendant of the Prophet Joseph Smith. His father was Joseph Fielding [Smith]. They have one child now, little Glenna Ruth. Last Saturday, February 1, [1969], I moved them to Provo [Utah County, Utah] to start to school. He is going into either business or seminary teaching. He is undecided. He thinks he would like business management, but he still thinks he would like to teach religion. Which one he will wind up with I do not know.

I am very happy with all my children. Each one is as different as day and night. That is the way I would have them because we would not want two alike. My children all have accused me of being better to Gail than I am to the rest of them, but it is not that I have been better to Gail. Gail has been an easier child to handle than the other children. She is collected, calm and very easy to reason with. She is a person who loves peace, yet she does not like to be pushed around and she will not be pushed around. She is a very easy person to get along with and has been an easy child to rear.

Christine [Cooper was] our third blessing, our beautiful little blue-eyed girl. I always used to say she was the cuddliest one we have had. She grew up in Washington [City]. These girls were only about thirty months apart. I sometimes feel that maybe they were a little underprivileged because we were not too well fixed financially when they were growing up, especially in their younger years. On the other hand, I feel like maybe it has been good for them because they learned to be self-reliant and quite capable of weathering the tide. She went to grade school and went to school in Tucson for a year and then back to Dixie.

Christine and Gail both were very athletically inclined. As long as we lived in Tucson, we lived in the First Ward, their ball team was never beaten in the whole stake the two years we lived there in basketball, volleyball or softball until Gail left there to come to St. George to go to school. They were a great team. In the little town of Washington [City] when they grew up, their team was never beaten in the stake. There were five of them: Gail and Christine, Claudia Whitney, Linda Nielsen, Jeannie Staheli and Minnie Gibson. Those [girls] were so united and a real team. They were never beaten in volleyball, basketball or softball.

Christine went to the 'Y' one year, but for some reason or another never felt quite at home at the 'Y'. She felt the school was too big. She was known as a number there. She needed something different than that, so [she] came down to CSU [College of Southern Utah, Cedar City, Iron County, Utah] and was very happy. She went a year at CSU. About six months before Gail came off of her mission, she came home one day and asked me what I thought about her going on a mission. I was astounded at this because when Gail went she said, "Oh pooh! that is for old maids." I told her that if that is what she wanted that it would thrill me to have her go on a mission. I felt that I wanted them to go because they wanted to go, not because I wanted them to go, but I would do all I could to support them. I said, "Have you talked to your bishop?" She said, "Oh yes, I have."

She was called to New Zealand. I do not know if this had anything to do with where the girls were called or not, but when the bishop asked Gail how much her dad could spend financially she said, "Oh, dad said the sky is the limit." [Laughter] So they sent her to the South British Mission. When they asked Christine how much her dad could spend she said, "Oh, dad said he will sell the cows if he has to." So they sent her to New Zealand. I thought the end of the world had come when they sent her out before Gail [came] home. I must say that, all the while these girls were on their missions, we got along financially better than any time in our life. It seemed like their money always came. I was very punctual in sending their checks to them. It seemed like some little thing would turn up that I would have money available to go down to the bank and get the check to send to them.

She spent eighteen months in New Zealand, the South Island, and filled a very good mission. She came home and went back to Provo to the 'Y' and took a refresher course there. [This is] a course the 'Y' puts out for returned missionaries. I think it is more or less to get them [back to] studying and school again. She began to see that she liked the smaller school better. She asked me what I thought about coming back down to CSU. I told her if that is what she wanted, to come. So she came back down to CSU and graduated with her bachelor's degree. Her major is physical education and her minor is English.

In this [recording], if she should hear a lot of English that is all fouled up, [laughter] at least she cannot criticize because I probably will not be around when she hears it. [Laughter]

We went about six years and had another lovely little girl. We thought if we waited awhile we might have a change in luck and have boys. But we had another lovely little girl which was a very welcome guest. Her name is Kallie Naomi [Cooper]. Kallie has been a lovely girl that we have loved and enjoyed. She is a level-headed child.

[END OF RECORDING THREE.]

EC: She also grew up to school age. She went to [the] first year in Washington [City] and then we moved to Tucson. She had her second and third [school] years in Tucson and came back and went to the sixth grade in Washington [City] and then to St. George to Woodward High [School]. She graduated from high [school] a year ago and [had attended] four years of seminary. Right now she is mixed up. She does not know whether she wants to go to college. She does not know what she wants to do. At the present time, she is working for me [at] the nursing home. She has entertained the idea of nursing. I hope that she will find out definitely [by] working as a nurse's aide here in the nursing home whether she wants to pursue that field or not. But, if not, she will get some [very] good experience. Kallie is now eighteen years old and living at home with us.

Then we have another lovely little girl. Her name is Nola Viola [Cooper]. "Nola Vee" we call her. She is nine years and fourteen days younger than Kallie. At the present time, she is nine years old and a very loveable little child. She has been around the nursing home a lot and the teachers at school say that she is advanced in her mind for [her age]. I think the reason is because she has more or less grown up around people of older age. Her vocabulary is astounding. She is a little showoff [and] likes to dance. She has had a lot of ballet and tap [dance lessons] and is doing very well on the piano. I am in hopes that, out of the five girls, I have one that stays with it. I do not care if they ever become a professional pianist or not. If they can get far enough along to play hymns and sheet music readily, that is far enough. You have to be [very] outstanding in the musical field to make a living at it. But there is always a lot of enjoyment in music in the home and church or wherever you might be. Nola is doing very [well]. We will soon [celebrate] her tenth birthday on March 28, [1969].

I wanted to say a little bit about Margarette again. I forgot to tell [on] this [recording] what a wonderful little mother Margarette is to her family. Even though they have had a lot of ups and downs in their nine or ten short years of married life, she has never complained. Everything is always roses with her. Her husband was not a member of the church when she met him. He joined the church before she married him, but he has been what we might term a lukewarm member. It has eliminated her ability to be as active as she would like to be because she loves to be active. She loves to sing and loves to be a part of [activities]. I have often felt that she was wasting a lot of wonderful talent on account of his attitude towards her working in the church and the fact that she does have a wonderful voice that no one hardly ever gets to hear. She and I sang quite a lot together when she lived here. I love to sing with her.

FH: Perhaps sometime that will change.

EC: I think so. She says two or three times back [that] he is going to church a lot there. Sometimes a little change of scenery helps one.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: Is there anything that we have forgotten?

EC: I would like to mention that the horse and wagon days have about died out of this generation. I am [very] glad that I lived in a time when I can remember both [times] quite readily. I suppose I must have been eight or ten years old before I had seen a car in the area. All of the freight, our food and everything, was hauled in here with horses, freight teams, most usually consisting of two or four horses. If there were four horses, there were two wagons and if there were two horses, there was one wagon. Sometimes [there would be] a third horse with a single wagon.

I made three trips with my father, one to Lund [Iron County, Utah] and two to Cedar City after freight. I remember the one [trip] in particular [when] going to Lund with my father. He had four horses and two wagons and he had a partner, Nels Sandberg, [who] had a single wagon. This, by the way, was the first time I had ever seen a train. It took six days to go to Lund and back after a load of freight. Lund was about thirty-five miles north of Cedar City. I remember a [man] by the name of Riddle had a big yard there where he sold hay and grain. [It was] a place [where] you could water the horses. A train came right along to the side of it. They would park the [train] cars. If [the car] was loaded with lumber and shingles, they parked the car [so] it was to come down in this area. The [trainmen] would park it on the siding and then the freighters could load. It took a lot of teams to haul a carload of lumber or a carload of shingles away.

I remember the night we [arrived] there [in] Lund. We were camped in this enclosure by this big corral. The train came in and it was [an] old steam engine. Boy, when he blew the whistle the horses from Dixie had not heard that and they just went frantic. I almost stampeded too because I was just a little [boy] and I had never heard or seen such a huge thing in all my life. It was really an experience. My dad loaded on these four horses [the] lumber on the wagons. The man that was with us just had a single team and he loaded shingles. The shingles were loaded way high in the air on what they called a hayrack. The time will come when the picture of a hayrack will be extinct to people. He loaded the shingles on the hayrack. He had his nephew with him, one of the little boys, Floyd Sandberg, [who] went to school with me. [He was] one of the Billy Goat Gruff [boys].

We used to play along the road when we would have to stop the horses to rest. We would get down, play along and drag along behind. But this man that was with us had an animal, a mare that was heavy with foal. I thought as I became older she was not sick. She was just so heavy [that] she [could] hardly [move]. When my dad would get up the hill he would unhook the horse and give me [the] single tree and told me to go back and spike him. It had a little chain and hook in the end of the tongue and helped him up the hill.

We camped one night out this side of Cedar City. It is right where the new [I-15] freeway goes now. The old road was a little east of that. We camped there by a

ranch [that] night. Atho [Jarvis] Milne [from] over [in] Washington [City] came along in a truck. That was the first truck I ever saw. One thing I remember about it was [the] hard rubber tires with great big holes through the tires. He camped with us that night. That was when Milne Truck Line [company] was starting out. The next morning we got up and [had] breakfast. My dad began to hook up the horses and he began to crank on his old truck. I remember the men standing there by the truck and commenting on how long it would take him to go to Lund after a load of freight and back. He assumed it would take him three days. He had come from St. George to Kanarraville [Iron County, Utah] that day. He figured the next day he would go to Lund and part way back and the next day [he would be] home. So he just doubled the time. That was one trip I went with my dad. I remember it was early in the fall of the year, possibly after school started or shortly before.

Another time, I remember going with him after coal. At that time they went east to Bellevue or Black Ridge [Washington County, Utah] they call it now. On the east side it was a very narrow road. I remember him wanting to travel after nightfall to get down to what they called the top of Bellevue Ridge. That place used to be called Bellevue. It was later named Pintura [Washington County, Utah]. But he wanted to go down to the top of Bellevue Ridge and I was so sleepy I could not sit up [at] the side of him. So he took the bedroll. He was loaded with coal. He flattened the coal out and he rolled the bed out on top of this coal and put me in the bed. He had some wide straps that he put across the wagon and cinched it down so I could not roll out. [Laughter] I do not know how long he traveled into the night.

We [came] down to the campground and they had to take the horses down in the canyon to water. He talked me into staying there at the camp while he went down to water the horses. I remember how frightened [I was] and how long it seemed he was gone. How thrilled and tickled I was when I could see those horses' hooves hitting the black rock coming up. [The horses] would throw sparks in the black rock and the sparks would fly. But every cedar tree looked like a booger to me! [Laughter]

Another time, I was with him and we were camped at Pintura — Bellevue then. The horses used to be adjusted to camping. They knew their grain and hay was there and they very seldom would ever leave. He turned the horses loose to go to water. It was just about dark. We were gathering wood to make a campfire. Lo and behold, when he looked around, one of the horses was gone. So he put a rope on the other [one], tied it up and we went down. I remember him striking matches to track [the horse]. He had gone around to the road and headed down the road. So he went across the road to some people by the name of Gregerson. First, we got on this horse and were going to catch him. He knew he could not make any time with me on behind him and I would not stay. I put up a real fuss because I would not stay with Gregersons. I was scared of them and bashful. Anyway, they had a telephone and he called down to Anderson's Ranch and told them the story. Mr. [Albert] Anderson said, "Well, that is fine. We will catch [the horse]. The

Washington [City] threshers are here, Frank Staheli's outfit. They are coming up the road in the morning. I will send him up [with] him." So they caught the horse. The next morning Gregersons let my dad take a horse and we started down the road. We met the Washington [City] threshers about halfway. That was when they moved the threshing outfit with [the] team. We turned the Gregerson's horse loose and it went back home. We took our [horse] and came on. He was loaded with lumber that time on a single wagon.

FH: These were [very] wonderful trips for you.

EC: It was the biggest thrill in the whole world to get to go. I guess the thing that would seem a pity to me now would be the fact that there was not a constant hurry. You knew it took you so long to go. They did not hurry. They did not seem to urge themselves to get there and get back. You just took your time and plugged along. Now the pressure we are under [is] to constantly [be in a] hurry. It is quite sad.

I remember the first car I remember seeing was on one of these trips with my dad. We had an animal with a team. I have heard my dad say several times in commenting that she [the horse] was scared of cars. I did not know what this was all about until this old car came puttering up the road. My goodness, this animal raised hell! She bucked and kicked, but she could not do anything. She was loaded so heavy, I guess. I remember that was my first recollection of an automobile frightening this horse. It was on the freight road.

FH: Have you had some nice trips with your wife?

EC: My wife and I did not do a lot of traveling until we moved to Bridger Valley, Wyoming. I was up there working and thought it would be nice for them to come up out of the heat. I rented a house there and they came up in the fall. Her grandparents lived in Roosevelt. We went out to Roosevelt and visited with them and came home.

This is quite funny: in 1956 we were reading our horoscope. [Laughter] This horoscope said that we would do a lot of unforeseen traveling that year. It was the year that they began to heckle me to buy this place down in Tucson. So we made a number of trips to Tucson in dealing for the place and [went] on down to Nogales [Mexico]. My wife's parents hadn't been through the temple. So they went through the temple. They had [a] boy [living] in San Fernando. My wife and her brother [Jerry Wilkins] were sealed to them in the Los Angeles Temple. In April we moved to Tucson. We went back over to San Fernando in June to pick up Margarete. After we were in Tucson [for] awhile, they were all so homesick that I felt like we would not be there all [of] our life, even though I often regretted that I sold there and came back [here]. I would have been able to retire now if I had stayed there and things [had continued to] go as good as they were while we were there.

I decided we would try and go somewhere every week around the area. So we toured pretty much all of Southern Arizona. We would take a trip about every week and go somewhere. Since we have had the nursing home, we have done quite a lot of traveling. We went over to San Francisco [California] and picked up Christine when she came off [her] mission. Then we came down the coast and did a lot of touring there. In the fall we took Margarette and her husband to Colorado. We went up north of Denver and back to Estes Park [Colorado] up over the Continental Divide and down into Steamboat Springs [Colorado] and down into Vernal [and] home.

We had an interesting experience when I was about in the third or fourth grade. There was a family from Steamboat Springs, Colorado [who] became marooned in the town of Washington [City]. There was a mother, a father, a grandfather and two children by the name of Helms. They went to school there that winter. Their car broke down and they lived in a boarded-up tent. They were very poor. They lived on jackrabbits and what people would help them [with]. They were really poor. These children, to me, were quite outstanding children. They did not belong to the Mormon Church, but they were [very] smart in school, both of them. Stern and Alice [Helms] were their names. In the spring, the father [had] the car fixed, got a little money together, and they went on to Steamboat Springs. I have often wondered what became of those [children]. They lived right near us in a boarded-up tent, right near my folks' place. The mother and the father used to sing quite nicely together. They used to come over in the evening and play the piano. He also played the violin.

Since then, I wrote [once] to Steamboat Springs to Stern. He answered my letter. Then I kind of gave it up. We [came] to Steamboat Springs last fall and got a motel [room]. I thought: I am going to see if they still live here. I began to inquire around and, by golly, the grandpa is dead and the father is dead, but the girl and the boy and the mother are still living there. They were tickled to death to see me. I was [very] thrilled to think that I had taken the time to look them up. She [Alice] is a beautiful woman. She is married and has three children. The old lady could remember [me]. She is getting quite old and deaf. I was [very] thrilled to think I took the time to see them.

FH: All these years since you have been married, have you been active in church work?

EC: To a certain extent, yes. In Washington [City] I was in the superintendency of the Sunday school. I was also president of the Quorum of Elders. I was stake drama director. We have been drama director in some ward or another for about fourteen years. The last work that I did in drama, I cannot tell you what year [it was], but it was the same year that the Lions' [Club] started putting on their minstrel show in St. George. I put on a little minstrel show and play around here and started it up [at] the [Shivwits] Indian Reservation. They [received] a lot of their material for

their first minstrel show from me and [the] minstrel show we put on. In this ward I have been [an] assistant to the superintendent of the Sunday school until I resigned and took [a] stake job with the MIA. I have done [a] little missionary work down [at] the [St. George] Temple. I quite enjoyed that. Then we do, or have done, a lot initiatory work down at the temple.

FH: You have kept your hand in [church work].

EC: I had my hands tied to a certain extent, as far as Priesthood meeting is concerned, because Priesthood meeting in this ward is when I have to be giving medications over at the rest home. That is something that everybody cannot tamper with. I have a few shots to give, so it is not all the time that I can [go to the meetings]. I have not accepted any positions or responsibility in Priesthood on that account. This Mutual work is in the evening. I have some free time [then] and I can work with it, I hope.

FH: After a lifetime of experience, you are well-qualified to give counsel and advice to your descendants. Would you like to do that and conclude with your testimony?

EC: First, I would like to say I have been very fortunate in having a good wife. My wife came from a humble family, a poor family. That is, they were poor at the time we were married. They were poor in all of her life in their home. They were a family that was a happy family. I think that has been a great help to me because a lot of our married life [we] have been financially poor. She has been a wonderful helpmate. There is nothing in the world that I have undertaken that she has not been [very] good to help me with. We have shared our finances. It was not what [was] hers was hers and what was mine was mine. It is ours.

In a lot of incidents, she could have done a little more counseling; that is, given me a lot more consolation if she would have counseled a little more, discussing a little more. But she always said, "You have good judgment. You do as you please and I will go along." Things have worked out so far for us along that line. Sometimes, it would [have] given me a little more satisfaction in making a deal or making a move if she [had] aired her feelings a little more. But that is just the attitude she has always taken: my judgment was good. She has been a [very] good helpmate which I appreciate a lot.

If I were giving advice to my children [that] would maybe help them: there is one thing that I have tried to be in my life and that is honest and sincere. When I worked for a man, I tried to give him a good day's work. When I told a man I would do a thing, I tried to do it. There have been a few times in my life when I could not meet an obligation, but I was always there to tell them that I could not meet the obligation, but I would do the best I could to catch it up which almost anyone appreciates. I feel like honesty is a very essential part of anyone's life. So I would advise my [children], if they were seeking my counsel, to always be honest and upright and sincere in their efforts.

Another thing that I would teach them or tell them is to be trusting and love their neighbor, because I do not think we were put here to live alone. I do not think that we can live alone and live well. We might exist, but we cannot live well unless we share and help our fellow man. I am in hopes that, should I fade out of the picture, that all of my children will have a desire to hang together to be close to each other. I think that is sad when parents die and children lose track of each other to the extent that they do not associate. After all, blood is thicker than water, or should be, at least. I see so much of this: when the parents go, the tie is broken and they spread apart.

I feel like it is always the darkest before the dawn and our religion has something to offer to us. I do not think there is anything on the face of the earth, or any organization on the face of the earth, that has as much to offer youth as the Mormon church does. Older people have lived their lives and they have shot their wad and they maybe could get along. But the young [people] have to have what the church has to offer them to make good outstanding people out of themselves. It makes me feel good to know that I can send nearly anybody downtown after something and say, "You can charge it to Evan. Charge it to the rest home," and there are no questions asked. It made me feel [very] good when I helped my brother-in-law with a little deal to purchase a home. I have never seen the people they borrowed the money from. I have not seen them yet, but I told him if they would accept me, I would be happy to sign with him and they could stick it out with Dun and Bradstreet. In three days the papers were here for me to sign. So Dun and Bradstreet must have checked me out thoroughly.

I think that is good for anybody and I hope my [children] will always be honest and truthful in their efforts. I hope they are always loveable. I hope they are good parents to their children and I hope they all have children. I think there is nothing like a family life.

I feel like even though maybe my testimony is not strong as a lot of people, I have seen healing of the sick. I had a man in Tucson [that] I sent to the hospital. He was a LDS man. The doctor sent him back and said, "Evan can do anything for him [that] we can do." He had been off and left. He had uremic poisoning. He might have been gone for months. He would pace the floor. His boy said, "Are you an elder?" I said, "Yes." He said, "Will you help me administer to dad?" We administered to his father and that man, for three months, his mind was just almost as clear as it had been throughout his life. Then he [became] sick and died right after. It was his son's request that his mind either be cleared or, if it was best for him to go, that he go. The whole family was astounded at how he had improved. In fact, the doctor said he did not think that he would live over five days when he sent him back.

I have seen the hand of the Lord act in [a] healing capacity. I have grown up in the Mormon church because it has offered me a lot of consolation. There have

been times when I have not attended church for quite a period of time for various reasons. It seems to me it eventually gets to where I feel like I have to have a spiritual feast. While I might only go there and just sit, there is something that it does for me. It relieves my tension and my feelings.

I think, in closing, that I would like to suggest to my [children] that they all stay close to the church and try to teach their [children] to stay close to it and stay close to one another. I believe these girls going on a mission will be a guiding light for these who have not. I think it is a good percentage for two out of five girls to fill a mission. I do not mean to brag. That is the farthest from my mind is to brag or to expect praise, because I am only a human being. I just want to go along and be of service to humanity as long as I [can].

[END OF RECORDING FOUR. END OF INTERVIEW.]