

Interview with
VEDA BELLE (LEAVITT) COX

March 31, 1969

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

**UTAH TECH UNIVERSITY LIBRARY
ST. GEORGE, UTAH**

#1969-069AB

Utah Tech University provides access to its collections as an unaltered, authentic historical record to aid in the research and understanding of history, while acknowledging their impact on various peoples and groups. Some collection materials are reflective of past cultures and prejudices, including images or words that are inherently offensive, insensitive and harmful. The University does not support, condone or endorse these harmful ideas, behaviors or attitudes, and they do not reflect the official opinion of the University. Rather, the University embraces a culture that prioritizes diversity and inclusion, as demonstrated in the University's Mission, Core Themes and Values.

Final editing was completed in 2011.
For permission to use any part of this transcript contact:

Special Collections and Archives
Utah Tech University Library
Holland Centennial Commons 330
Utah Tech University
St. George, UT 84770
(435) 634-2087
specialcollections@utahtech.edu

Any views, findings, conclusions, or recommendations expressed in this transcription do not necessarily represent those of the National Endowment for the Humanities, the Utah Humanities Council, the Utah State History Division, or the Utah State Historical Society.

This transcription was made possible by a generous contribution from the Humanities Council and the Utah State History Division.

INDEX

Adams, Dora (Cox) [daughter]	27
Adams, Mervin [Dora's husband]	27
Basketball	12
Bruises	13
Buying House	29, 30
Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The	16
Circus	6
Cox, Annie Elizabeth (Jones) [mother-in-law]	10
Cox, Annie Irene [sister-in-law]	10
Cox, Betty Jean (Buchanan) Yeakel [Clark's second wife]	26
Cox, Clark [son]	26
Cox, David Marriner [husband]	21
Cox, David Marriner, Jr. [son]	24
Cox, Irene (Leavitt) [Clark's first wife]	26
Cox, Nola (Leavitt) [David Marriner, Jr.'s wife]	25
Cox, Veda Belle (Leavitt)	5
Courtship	21
Dancing	12
Dimick, Grant [LaRae's first husband]	23
Education at Reno, NV	10
Elocution	6
Farm	9, 30
Farm Work	13
Fish, Seymour	9
Gentry, Harry Henry	20
Gentry, Martha Ellen (Syphus)	20
Gypsum Camp	29
Hafen, Eleanor (Cox) [daughter]	28
Hafen, Maxwell Kent "Tim" [Eleanor's husband]	28
Inferiority Complex	19
Judd, Mr. [teacher]	11

Las Vegas, NV	29
Las Vegas, NV Wedding	22
Leavitt, Alfred Hale [brother - died as infant]	18
Leavitt, Betsey Levisa [sister]	18
Leavitt, Dudley [paternal great-grandfather]	14
Leavitt, Elfonda “Fon” [sister]	18
Leavitt, Elmer [brother]	18
Leavitt, Laura Mellvina (Thompson) [paternal grandmother]	14
Leavitt, Leah [sister]	18
Leavitt, Lemuel Smith [brother]	18
Leavitt, Lemuel Sturdevant [paternal grandfather]	14
Leavitt, Mary Eleanor (Leavitt) [mother]	5
Leavitt, Newell [half-brother]	11
Leavitt, Orange Decater [father]	5, 14
Leavitt, Sarah [sister]	18
Leavitt, Theresa Gladys [sister]	18
Leavitt, Thirza Hale (Riding) [maternal grandmother]	15, 16
Leavitt, Thirza Helena [father’s polygamous wife]	5
Leavitt, Thirza Olive [sister]	18
Leavitt, Thomas [uncle]	14
Lee, Glen	21
Nervous Breakdown	32
No Shoes	13
Parent Teachers Association [PTA]	9
Reading	19
Rencher, Miss [teacher]	6
St. Thomas, NV	20
School	6
Smith, Alden [LaRae’s second husband]	24
Smith, LaRae (Cox) Dimick [daughter]	23
Teaching Degree	11
Teaching School	6 - 9
Testimony	32
United Order	15
Whiting, John M. [teacher]	11
Work	9
World War II	25

VEDA BELLE (LEAVITT) COX

Veda Belle (Leavitt) Cox was interviewed on March 31, 1969 between Bunkerville and Mesquite, Nevada by Fielding H. Harris, a representative of Voices of Remembrance Foundation. She related her personal history of living in various parts of Nevada and California.

FH: What is your full name?

VC: [My name is] Veda Belle (Leavitt) Cox.

FH: What is your birth date?

VC: [I was born] May 27, 1902.

FH: [What is the] place of your birth?

VC: [I was born in] Bunkerville, Nevada.

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

VC: [My father's name was] Orange Decater Leavitt.

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

VC: My mother's [name was] Mary Eleanor (Leavitt) [Leavitt].

FH: What do you remember about your early life before you went to school?

VC: I do not remember too much. I do remember that I loved my father and mother greatly. My father had two wives so when we had a chance to have him at our home we were most pleased. Maybe [there] was a little more love [by] not having him all the time than it would have been had we [had] him all [the time].

[Orange Decater Leavitt's two wives were: Thirza Helena Leavitt and Mary Eleanor Leavitt.]

FH: Did he go on a [LDS] mission shortly before you were born?

VC: Yes. Before I was born he went to Michigan on a mission. His first wife led the whole group and helped everybody. Our two families helped to keep him [on the mission]. She was thrifty. My mother was a little more meek and humble and was not quite as aggressive. He [was] on this mission for two years.

FH: Did he have quite a family before he went?

VC: Yes. I am about the seventh child in our family and then the other family had a big family. He had about twenty-two children [altogether].

FH: This was a great undertaking for a man in this situation.

VC: This is right. It took a lot of faith, a lot of courage and ambition.

FH: Did you come along after he came home?

VC: [It was] after he had been home long enough for me to be born.

FH: Tell about your [education].

VC: I started school at six years of age. I was [very] frightened because I thought I did not know anything. When I [was] in school it was so dear to me. I loved it with all my heart. I had a teacher, Miss Rencher, [who] lived in Utah [in her] later years. I do not know where she came from in the beginning. She was the dearest teacher that I can ever remember having. She was an elocutionist and so I learned at an early age to speak pieces. During [the] early years of my life, up until I was married, I read declamations in school [in] contests. I gave them before the public.

When I was about eight years old they had a circus [in] Mesquite. We all went to this big circus. As we went into the gate, somebody said to me, "Why not speak us a piece?" They were always asking me to speak pieces. So I had more of a crowd than the circus by the time I [was] through speaking pieces. This is [what] I enjoyed. I loved it!

[There were] two old bachelors [who] lived down below Bunkerville on ranches. They would come up every week or two [to] get groceries. They heard about me saying pieces. So they gave me \$.05 or \$.10, [and] that was a lot of money in those days, [if] I would speak pieces. I went around and earned money speaking pieces. I loved this [doing] this. Occasionally, some of the [children would] get married [who] I [taught in] school. I taught fourth grade most of my teaching years. They [have] asked me to give a reading [at] their weddings, which I [am] am grateful for.

FH: This shows you that they remember.

VC: They remember me. They come back from college and say, "We never had a better teacher [than] Mrs. Cox." It does something to you when you [are] older!

FH: How far did you go in school?

VC: I graduated from high school and, in those days, we were poor. My father had died when I was fifteen [years old] and we were poor. My mother did not have much [money to] live [on]. She had a little \$7.00 pension at the time. We had had a little stock and [some] money. Some of the older boys [received] that, so we did not have much to [live] on.

There was [a] one-year normal school that they [started] in the southern part of Nevada through [the] State College at Reno [Nevada]. She sent me to one year of [this] normal [school] down [at] St. Thomas [Nevada] which is now covered with Lake [Mead]. I [went] a year down there. I had \$15.00 cash during that year. My sister [Leah] [who] was older and was teaching school sent me a two-piece dress and a hat to match. I wore that to school all winter by wearing it all week, coming home and cleaning it up on weekends and going back to school. I had had a taffeta dress that she bought me. I wore that to dances because I was grown up and had a few boyfriends at that time.

I finished and was given certification enough to teach three years. I [received] recommendations from my normal teacher enough that I was placed in the district. Then we had a district in Overton, Nevada with a superintendent called District Number One. Since [then], they have combined Clark County [and] we are all in Clark County [Nevada]. The superintendent of District Number One [was] A. L. Kelly. [He] gave me a contract to teach in the gyp [gypsum] camp which is up in the White Hill, just above Glendale, Nevada as you go through on Highway 91. It is [the] I-15 [Freeway] now, but it was [Highway] 91 then. I went to this gyp camp and taught in a boarded-up tent. I had fifteen long benches and thirty-one students of all grades up and including [the] eighth grade. I had boys that could not get in the door without stooping. I was a [small] girl of about 110 pounds at the time.

I was frightened about the school because the year before, they had run three teachers out [by] their meanness. Some of those [children] blew the motor car off the track. [This was] the motor car that went down the valley. They would go down at [the] noon hour and after school, put gasoline on their pigs and cows and set fire to the hair. They milked their cows during the noon hour so they would not get much milk at night. They wrote dirty [words] on the tent sides. The gyp camp was [made up of] mining people [who] were divorced and people [who] had never managed their children. They were tough kids. I was frightened and I cried hard to my sister who was older. I said that Mr. Kelly would not have given me that job. He knew they would run [me off] and he just figured I would fail at it. My sister said, "No, Mr. Kelly is the type of person [who] knows you can handle [it] or he would not have [given you the contract]."

I was happy to have had it here, because a lot of the normal [school] students in my year had to go to Utah. The wages were about \$55.00 to \$60.00 lower in Utah than in Nevada. I received a \$105.00 a month and they were receiving about

\$60.00 [or] \$55.00. It was quite a difference so I was happy for that reason. I went to that school and I can say that we [did] not have [any] trouble that year.

FH: That speaks well for your ability as a teacher.

VC: I was only about twenty years old. I was young and [very] frightened, but I did a lot of praying. I have always been a praying person. I have always believed the Lord would help me in my efforts.

I remember one instance. They used to ship out vegetables [on] the train [that] ran down. In between, they had a motor car that took the mail and that sort of [items] down there. These boys that blew the motor car off the track and did all of this mischief never gave me one minute's trouble. I began by giving them little special chores to do. I was strict even though I was young. I went in there letting them know I was boss, not them, and that I would not take any foolishness. Those boys later were delinquent all through their life and have been in jail two-thirds of their lives. I guess they are still in jail. After their mother was older, she came back and said [to] me, "I do not know, Mrs. Cox. I do not know whatever happened that you did what you did for my boys." I was a Leavitt at the time I taught.

I had one boy [whose] mother and father were divorced. He would follow the mining camps with his dad. He was [very] tough. He was not going to sing the opening [song]. We always sang and prayed [at the beginning of each school day]. I believed in prayer, and even then, they did not say we could not pray in school. So we had a prayer in the morning and he would not sing. He just stood there. One morning, brave as I was, I said, "Donald, if you do not sing this morning, you are coming to the head of the class and with my help to start you out, you are going to sing this song." It was *The Star Spangled Banner*, and he was going to [have to] sing the first verse. They all knew it [very] well. He did not come up when I called him so I proceeded to go after him. When I [was] down to his seat he threw up his fist and clenched his fist as much as to defy me and said, "If you try, I will give you a biff." I looked right in his eyes and said, "Young man, I am [very] small, but I am really tough. If you ever put your hand [or] touch me, it would be the last time for you." He walked up to the front of the room and sang the song. It was only the Lord that was with me, really. I could not have done it on my own.

I had an eighth grader [who] was smart-alecky. So I expelled him from school. I said, "You cannot come back to school until you see the superintendent," which was down [in] Overton and that was quite [far] away. "You see the superintendent and make it right with him. Then you come and ask my forgiveness for the trouble that you have caused me." He was out of school and I heard remarks from all around the mining camp from other people that his mother was [very] angry and she was calling me all kinds of names. But this did not bother me. I said, "I should worry. I feel like I did the right thing and what she says I do not care."

At Christmastime at this gyp camp I married [David] Marriner Cox. He had been the love of mine from the time I was a little girl. He had a lot of girlfriends and I thought I was out, but he finally married me. We were [very] happy and took our honeymoon from the gyp camp over to Bunkerville at Christmastime, December 20. [1922].

We raised five children. I went on teaching and had a baby the next year in October [1923]. That [ended] my career of teaching school. I only had one year of teaching. I could have had three [years], but I stopped to raise my babies. Every two years I had a baby until I had five. I was thirty years old and I did not have anymore. I raised these five children before I went back to teaching.

During this time, we lived in Las Vegas [Nevada] and the [children] went to school and grew up there. I washed and ironed for all my friends that I had met [from] the church to help out with our living [expenses]. Then I worked in the [United States] Post Office [for] about three years in North Las Vegas to help with the living [expenses]. Then we moved from there over on the farm because my husband always wanted to farm. I was not too happy about it because I had farmed as a youngster. We farmed all our life. I worked hard from the time I was eight years old. I [have] worked hard all my life, really.

We moved over on the farm. [Seymour Fish] came looking for my son [David] who was in college at the time, but his G. I. [Bill, officially titled Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944] had run out. He thought he would stop [attending college] at Christmastime. They had an opening over [in] Mesquite. The principal, Mr. Fish, came looking [for] my son because he had written to [Mr. Fish] about [an opening]. The son had decided to borrow money and go on with his [education]. So my older sister [who] had taught all her life, since she was young, was there and said [to me], "Why not take this school?" I said, "I could not take this school, all these [past] thirty years I have hardly picked up a book."

I took care of [children], scrubbed and did everything but any school work. I worked in PTA [Parent Teacher Association] in Las Vegas while the [children] were growing up so I was affiliated with the school. I was interested in what my [children] were learning all my life. I was interested in education. So I visited schools a lot and helped with their little fiestas and programs, but I had not done much studying. She kept at me and my husband. I told Mr. Fish when he came, "I do not have a degree. I have one year of normal [education] and nobody knows about that." There was a fire at Overton and everything was destroyed. I had not kept my report card. So I said, "I could not possibly take a school." He said, "You take the school and we will see about all of that."

He had gone to [see] Leonard Reber and a few [others who] had been principals at Mesquite and asked about me. They gave me good recommendations [and] they felt I would be alright as a school teacher. So I went back to school in teaching at the age of fifty. I [taught] every year. For twelve years [at] CSU [College of

Southern Utah] at Cedar City [Iron County, Utah] in the summer and took six weeks [of classes]. I went two years [to college in] Reno so I could get my degree because it [offered me] more money. As long as you are working, you might as well make what you can get. So I went to Reno. After the first year at Reno, I did [very] well. On my transcript I came out with between [a] 3.7 and 3.8, [grade] point average. The second year I went to Reno [and] had a bad heart attack. I overdid [it], I guess.

During [the] time that I was going to school I had his mother [Annie Elizabeth (Jones) Cox] and my mother [during the] summertime. I took care of them, brought them to our home, gave them their meals, put them to bed, got them up, gave them their breakfast, fixed their lunch, took them home, chopped my mother's wood to build a fire for her and did all of this besides teaching all winter and going to school all summer.

I broke [my health] and had a heart attack. They sent me from Reno out of school. As soon as I was able to even sit up, my husband took me to the superintendent. I said, "I came early to tell you that I will not be able to teach properly. I am feeling better and I am getting better all the time, [but] you can get another teacher before the last minute." I have always tried to be fair to people. The principal said, "We will wait a little while." I said, "I have to have fifteen credits before they will let me teach another year." That is why I had gone to Reno to finish up. That was just temporary. I did not have a degree. He said, "I am going to Carson City [Nevada] tomorrow and we will see about you teaching next year with the credits you have."

He came back and did not let me know a thing about it until about a week before school started. I told the principal [who had] come here, "When you go down to your meeting, would you ask if I am to teach? What has he decided about it? I have not heard a word." He came back and said, "Mr. Fish says you are to teach." So I taught a half year that year. The next year he said, "You go to school and get some more credit. We want you to be a full-time teacher." So I went back every year for twelve years because I only [could get] six weeks [of classes] in at a time.

They gave me thirty-one credits for the first normal [school year]. They found an old book with [my record] in it. They would not have known I ever took any normal [education], but it was an accredited first year normal. I went back and was not working for a degree. I just went to be a better teacher, for [new] methods. This is what I took mostly, [along with] children's literature, [some] theater and [classes] that would make me a better teacher. I did not go for credit, only for that, because I did not intend to get a degree. I was [too] old. I went back in the spring of 1963. I was sixty-one years old. I took a leave of absence for two and a half months and went back in the spring quarter and [received] my degree.

FH: That is wonderful!

VC: I think it is quite a feat because, when you are older and are fifty years old, you are going down in mentality. I had been out of school for thirty years without any studying or anything. For the first few weeks it was like a blank wall. But again, I prayed [very] hard and depended on the Lord a lot for the knowledge and the intelligence so I could pass the tests and could get through. I made all 'A's' and 'B's' [and] about three or four 'C's' during this time.

When I came back, they retire you at sixty-five [years of age]. I had three years [left]. I had my degree. I came up \$1,500.00 so I [earned] a little more money, but I was still about \$2,000.00 [or] \$3,000.00 under anyone else and working just as hard as or harder than most of them. This was my fault because I did not come back early enough and I was not out for [the] money. I loved the work. I loved the [children] and I still love it.

FH: That is why you were a good teacher.

VC: I love it. I still love it. [At] this point, I had [a] nervous breakdown. The principal and I did not get along too well on account of he promised me different things and at the last minute gave them to somebody else [who] did not have any credit. I had worked for all the credits. So I am [very] happy to not go back.

FH: Tell about some of the teachers you had.

VC: I can remember that I skipped from [the] first grade to [the] third [grade]. This was about the worst teacher I ever had. He was an old man by the name of Judd from St. George [Washington County, Utah]. He was a good enough fellow, I guess, but he had people [who] went to his room and helped him to do a few dishes and clean up his room, I don't know. He always had a few [who] he showed partiality [to, and] I never liked that [trait] in people. I skipped [the] second grade and did not get the fundamentals of that grade. The only thing I can ever remember learning in that grade was how to tell time.

[When] I went to [the] fourth grade, I had a Mr. [John M.] Whiting from Mapleton [Utah County] Utah. He later married one of my husband's sisters [Annie Irene Cox]. It was there I learned all the fundamentals of school. The teacher was the type [who did] not [show] any partiality. When he walked in the room and looked at you, there was not any noise. [There were] no discipline problems at all. I learned all the fundamentals that I ever learned right in fourth grade. I did have a good eighth grade [teacher]. I had my own brother [probably half-brother Newell Leavitt] teaching English in [the eighth grade]. I learned all the English as far as diagramming and parts of speech in that grade. As I say, I enjoyed all my school years.

FH: Do you feel those early teachers were a high type of teacher?

- VC: [They were very] high type. We had one or two years [where] they brought in people of the world [who] were not our religion. They were pretty good teachers, but sometimes we did not like some of the ways they taught. I mean they brought in things. We grew up here as rural, good [children]. As a whole, we had [very] high type teachers — a lot better than we have today, I can tell you that.
- FH: In these early years did you [go on] a few trips?
- VC: We went to Overton mostly. That was our rival and it still is. If we could beat Overton — oh, boy! For nine years we kept the camp [where] my husband was playing basketball. The girls played, [but] I was not too good a player. I always played, but I was not outstanding. We had girls [who] were really top players. I was a little slower on foot. Maybe I had more brains than I had physical ability. We really enjoyed it. Another thing, when we had these basketball [games] and the boys would go [out of town] and we did not go with them, when they came home we met them down [at] the [Virgin] River. We came in wagons. We would meet them at the river, get those [boys] on the shoulders of the big boys and men and bring them all the way to the crossing, which is a long way through the fields down to where the bridge crosses.
- FH: They would not dare to come home without winning, would they?
- VC: We yelled and had the times of our lives. Even the teachers [who] came [here] were such good sportsmen. All of the recreation we had in our town was the best kind of recreation. We had the games, the parties and the dances that were outstanding. There has never been anything like it.
- FH: [Did] you have a lot of fun in those growing-up years?
- VC: A lot of fun! I danced every step and I loved it. I still go to the dances and enjoy them. I go to wedding dances. Dancing was our best bet!
- FH: You did a lot of different things to help out on the farm. Did you herd the cows?
- VC: I herded cows. I herded pigs. We had one older boy [Elmer] of my mother's family. My father was a freighter in the olden days and had eight to ten pair of horses and big wagons. So the boys freighted a lot. Our younger brother was the youngest boy in the family, so we girls grew up to be [like] the boys, really. When I came along, my sister [Elfonda "Fon"], just younger than I, was sick a lot of the time. The sister [Theresa Gladys] just older was a [very] strong, stubborn child and she did about what she wanted. If she did not want to go to the field, she ran, but I went. I cried because I did not want to go, but I never did stand up and say I would not go. So I went and herded cows, herded pigs, chopped cane, chopped hay, shot grain when the grain up in this upper field was so thick and heavy that you could not step between the bundles. I tromped hay and [did] all of those things. Besides, I was the milker. I did the outside chores. I milked the cows. I fed

the pigs and the chickens; even after I was married and grown up, I did it to relieve my mother of this hard work.

FH: Was your father, being a freighter, away most of the time?

VC: Most of the time. We loved him so much that we would go all the way down to the bottom crossing where the lower bridge is today to meet him. We would wait all day and get tired of waiting. It would begin to get dusk so we would come home. About the time we [reached] the yard, our father would drive in. We were [very] happy to see him. He was away [from home] a lot.

FH: When you were out in the hills herding cattle, were you barefoot?

VC: I never really had a good pair of shoes until I was about sixteen [years old] because we just did not have any money. Our father made quite a little money, but it took a lot of money for [the] horses.

FH: Did you get your feet all bruised up?

VC: I had a lot of bruises. My feet seemed to be more tender than most peoples. I had stone bruises and [they] would be black as coal. They would come to a head after so many weeks. [Sometimes it would be] months that they would be growing to a head. While they were [growing], they were so painful. They would put on black seed poultices and bread and milk poultice. We would even go out in the corral and get that poultice. I had poultices on my feet all night. I would cry some nights, all night, with the pain because of the drawing. When they would [become] a yellow spot, then my father would take these long-handled razors and cut [or] slice [them]. This would draw out all the pus. I had them every week or two. I do not think I missed one day of school all during this time. I loved school. I was afraid I would lose something if I stayed out, so they wrapped them in poultices. I would put an old sock on and go to school. Most children would have been embarrassed, but I was not.

FH: That shows how much [education] meant to you.

VC: I do not know why I grew up with that much of desire, but I did. My father was an educator. He was on the school board and this might have been one reason. He was a real pusher — which I have always been, too.

FH: Tell what you remember about your father.

VC: My father was a [very] kind father. He was also kind to other people. Thomas Henry was a boy [who] grew up with my [father]. My grandfather [Lemuel Sturdevant Leavitt] married his mother [Mary Ann Morgan (Adams) Leavitt] and so my father was with him and his older brother [Thomas Leavitt]. They grew up together here [in] Bunkerville. He would tell [people] that my father was so kind

to them that they all loved him. The older boy [Thomas Leavitt] was just the opposite. He was [very] mean and drove them quite a little, but my father was always known as a [very] kind, good man and very religious. We had our home evenings. They say they brought out a new program of home evening — we always had our home evenings. We had our prayers, our scripture reading and our singing. We had everything they have today. We had the lessons taught to us by our father.

FH: Has this really paid off?

VC: It has in almost all our lives. We have a good family.

FH: Do you know anything about his parents?

VC: His mother [Laura Melvina (Thompson) Leavitt] died early so I did not know his mother at all. I knew his father [Lemuel Sturdevant Leavitt]. My father died young [on January 2, 1918]. He was only fifty-eight years old [and] I was fifteen [years old]. Then the older brother [Thomas Leavitt] lived in Bunkerville and he lived a long life. When Grandpa Lemuel Leavitt came down from Santa Clara to visit, he generally went to the older boys —.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

VC: — their own pigs. We had food in our [inaudible]. My [great-grandfather] Dudley [Leavitt] was this type of a person. I have heard my mother tell in her later years, and I have heard other old people in Santa Clara say, that had it not been for my great-grandfather Dudley those people [who] came there from Switzerland without much could never have survived had my great-grandfather not killed beef, taken them a piece and distributed it, gone to Parowan [Iron County, Utah] to the flour mill [and] brought back sacks of flour. He [had] a big tin milk pan, like we used to have, [and took] each family flour enough to make some bread. They would cry to my mother and say, “We could never have survived if it had not been for Dudley.”

FH: Was that a wonderful thing to know about him?

VC: This is right. Another thing, he was living when I was a young girl, so I remember him. As he [became] older he was ambitious and had a little old rawhide chair. His hair was white as could be. We built cisterns in those days to put in spring water. [That water] was soft and it would do us most of the summer for drinking and for washing [clothes] rather than to try to cleanse the mud down [at] the [Virgin] River which was alkali. He dug cisterns [while sitting] on this little rawhide [chair]. He would get down in the cistern. They would let him down and he started digging. He would get so far and somebody would drop the dirt and he would shovel it in, put it in the bucket, [while] sitting on this little rawhide chair.

[He did this] almost up to the time of his death. They lived the United Order a lot here in Bunkerville.

[The United Order was organized by Brigham Young. It was a community system where participants contributed their possessions and labor and received in return what they needed to live on.]

FH: I did not know that was here. Was it successful?

VC: [It was very] successful for a time and then people would get a little selfish. They put everything into a tithing office. They paid their tithing with produce. Then they would [give] it out to the people [who] needed it. Those [who] needed [it] most [received] what they needed.

I might tell you about my grandmother, my mother's mother [Thirza Hale (Riding) Leavitt]. She was a little English lady, [very] cute. She always had her tea, all her life, even though she was a good church member, but she was not quite as strong as my grandfather. When they went into the United Order and everybody was putting in their cattle and everything they had, my grandmother said, "No. I have some cattle. I am not putting them in." So she rebelled a little on that. She was not as strong [a member].

FH: It would take a lot of faith to do that.

VC: This is right. Now my mother had the faith. My mother would have done it, but she [inherited] her faith, a lot, from my grandfather. Not that my grandmother did not have it, because she was a good old lady, but she was a different type of person. My mother took care of her mother all the days of her life after her husband died and she [became] older. She would not have any of the other girls or boys take care of her. Not financially, because my grandmother had a grape vineyard on her lot [and] she had chickens. When she died, she had money in the store from these [things] of her own. She was frightened of storms, even wind. [One time a storm came up and] my mother happened to be in church and grandmother was not there as she grew older. My mother left church and ran to her place, as fast as she could go, because she knew how frightened she was.

As a child, I slept with my grandmother a lot of the time. She had a little habit that they laughed about. None of them liked it much, [but] I did not mind. She wiggled her toes a little and nobody liked that, but I did not mind it so I slept with her more than any [of the] other children. I remember when I was in first or third grade, I did not go to second [grade], I asked her [about it] and she told me. She thought that was about the cutest thing that anybody could have said. She had a rock wall around her place and I was a little scared myself because my father's first wife always told ghost stories and stories that frightened us when we were [children]. [She did] not mean any harm. I loved her a lot, almost as much as

my own mother. She brought all the babies into this world around here. [She was] aggressive, strong and did a lot of hard work.

I was frightened and so every time before I would get to the house there was this pomegranate [tree] along on the next lot. I would call, “Grandma.” I can still hear her today. She would say, “Whooo?,” answering me. Finally, one night she said to me, “Veda Belle, how come you always call me when you get to the rock wall before you get here?” I said, “Grandma, I want to be sure that you have not turned into a bear.” She thought this was cute for a little tyke. I loved my grandparents. I have always loved old people, even my mother’s sisters and their brothers and her brothers’ wives. I loved them. When they [were] old I loved them even more because I love old people.

FH: In these earlier years, were you active in [The] Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints]?

VC: I [have] taught classes [in church] since I was fifteen [years old].

FH: Did you attend Primary, Sunday school and MIA [Mutual Improvement Association]?

VC: All [of] those [organizations].

FH: Did you [hold] an office in MIA at age fifteen?

VC: I was first counselor in the presidency. Laura Bowman was the president. She asked me to be her helper.

FH: Did you have a lot of faith?

VC: I have always had a lot of faith. I believe in all of the gospel.

FH: Do you remember any faith-promoting [events] from those years?

VC: With my mother, I [witnessed] so much in the administration during [her] sickness. She has been healed so many times.

FH: Was this a way of life?

VC: This was our life.

FH: Have you had a special occasion in your life when a prayer of faith was given?

VC: All my life my prayers have been answered. Only once can I ever remember not having [a prayer] answered.

FH: Maybe [it] was answered in a negative.

VC: Maybe. Some would say maybe it was for the best, but it was a divorce case and I do not think divorce is ever the best [solution] — regardless. This is the way I am.

FH: Sometime you may even find that that was right.

VC: Maybe.

FH: What did you do for fun growing up?

VC: [We had] hayrack rides, horseback riding [and] corn husking bees. We got [sorghum] cane and chewed it and sucked it. We went buggy riding. My dad had one of the first white-topped buggies and we thought we were elite people by having the first one. [We did] melon busting and danced. I love dancing. I would rather dance today than eat.

FH: Was your father one of the first ones [to live] in this area?

VC: This is right. They came in here in 1877 because they were asked by the church to come and grow cotton in this area. That is what they did. They looked over the area [on] the Mesquite side and it was sandy and [had] a lot of mesquite [bushes]. Then they came over on this side and it was richer [and] heavier ground. They stopped on the hill above our field and [laid] the first foundation [for] the first house that [was] built there. They used that mainly as a place to eat, [like] a boarding place. The rest of [their living was done in] covered wagons and lean-tos [made out of] water willow bushes. They used this [first building] for a mess hall.

The boys had to work. They did not get much [education]. They had to herd their horses and their cows out on the mesa. There was a lot of grass [out] there then. They had to spend the nights herding their stock [and be] ready to work them the next day. [When] I was teaching the fourth grade in Mesquite, I taught the history of Bunkerville and gave [the students] a little history. Every student had a little history written up of [the early beginnings].

They had a difficult time with the dam keeping the water in the ditch. The floods would come from the mountains and wash out the ditch and fill it up. Many a time they came almost to moving out and then they would try it again. We are still having a lot of trouble with the [Virgin] River.

FH: They deserve a lot of credit for this.

VC: I do not think that anybody will be more blessed than these people for what they did.

FH: I am sure that is right.

VC: They always stayed true to the faith [and] to the gospel.

FH: They are strong in faith.

VC: [They were] very strong.

FH: How many children did your parents have?

VC: My mother had ten [children]. I think the other woman had eleven or twelve [children]. She lost quite a few of hers as babies. I cannot remember how many grew up.

FH: Can you name your own brothers and sisters?

VC: I can name hers, too, the ones [who] did not die. My oldest sisters were [Thirza] Olive Leavitt and Betsey [Levisa Leavitt]. The next one was Alfred Hale [Leavitt]. He died as a baby. Then [there was] Elmer, Leah, [Theresa] Gladys, myself, Elfonda, we call her "Fon," Sarah and [Lemuel] Smith [Leavitt]. [These] were my mother's children.

FH: Did your mother lose one?

VC: As a baby, yes.

FH: What can you tell about your family?

VC: I love all my brothers and sisters. I can truthfully say that I have never had any difficulties getting along with them. My older brother, Elmer, [started] smoking and drinking a little. One time when the wife he lives with divorced him, he drank quite a bit. This broke my mother's heart. I could say to him anything I wanted to about him doing this and why not quit on account of mother and he never came back and said one word to me. If any of the other [children] would say this he would get [very] angry and cuss them out. But he never came back at me about it.

FH: You had a way. That is a real blessing.

VC: Some way, I got along with all of them.

FH: Have you enjoyed music in your life?

VC: I have always enjoyed the finer arts. I grew up that way. I loved to hear all types of music and would have loved to have my [children] have some [musical training], but we were poor. [When they] grew up, my husband made such a little wage that we just could not afford to give [them] lessons. They did not do it until they [were] on their own. My youngest daughter learned to play the piano on her

own. She is a child that thinks she can do anything anybody else can do so she does it. She does anything and does it well.

FH: People can do this.

VC: I grew up with a little inferiority complex. Even though I did a lot of things, I always felt a little inferior, that I was not quite as good as this one or that one. I got over that as I [went] into teaching. Everybody and the administration at the higher level said what a wonderful teacher I was.

FH: You even proved to yourself that you could.

VC: This is right. You have to think something of yourself. Now, I feel I can do anything as well as anyone else, maybe not everything, but some things. Teaching is a talent that the Lord gave me. I know it as sure as I am sitting here. He gave me this talent. I have tried all my life to do something with the talent He gave me, which I have.

FH: How do you feel about reading?

VC: I think this is the only way we can learn by reading. They say pictures are most important, which they are. Experience is one of the greatest things, but you still have to read. I cannot experience all of the things that I get from the gospel [without] reading the standard works.

FH: This allows you to spread out your understanding.

VC: This is right. I feel I am a good reader. I learned to read well because I took elocution. I read all through my school life. I have read in college. I took speech classes and oral expression classes. I am a good reader. This has helped me to put over the lessons I have given. I have taught a lot of adult classes besides student classes.

FH: Tell about your courtship and your marriage.

VC: I ran after my husband, all the days of my life, since I was a little girl. I loved him and ran after him. I tried to not show it too much, but my parents knew it.

FH: Did you have to do it in a subtle way?

VC: Kind of, and shed a few tears over it. But I had a good time all the time I was doing it. I had cousins in the valley, in the town, that when I did not have a date they came and took me to Mutual. They took me to dances, they took me hayrack riding. I was the type of child [who] really loved life. I had a good time everywhere I went. I still have a good time. I can move into any community and make friends and have a good time. I have always been this way. I adjust well. It

probably was born in me. Maybe I made some of it myself as the years have gone by.

FH: [Did] your husband pay much attention at first?

VC: No. He had every girl in the country [area] but me. My aunt, my father's first wife, [was] a little upset because I cried a lot to her and told her a few things like you do. You confide in them more than I did my own mother. For some reason, she was a little more blustery type and I thought she might bring us together a little more. She told me, "Do not worry. When he settles down and wants to marry, you will be the one he marries." This is what she said. I think he had already told her this because she [went] after him about kind of sloughing me when he had a date with me and going with somebody else. I felt [very] bad.

FH: Did he do that?

VC: Yes! He did that with other girls, too, so I did not feel too bad. If he had a date with a girl and he met me first, he would take me to the dance. If he had a date with me and met another girl, he took [her]. He was a real sheik. He was good looking and had a way with the girls. I was not this type. I did not take too well to fellows. I had a good time and it did not bother me too much.

FH: Did you go away to work before you finally got him?

VC: Yes.

FH: How did you get him? How did it work out?

VC: I went to normal school. But I went to work early in life when my father died. My friend and I, just young girls about sixteen or seventeen years old, went to St. Thomas and worked for an old man and a lady. It was when the road went down through St. Thomas into Las Vegas. We went down there and took over for an older lady and gentleman [who] were wonderful people. They were [the] Gentrys. [Harry Henry and Martha Ellen (Syphus) Gentry owned the store and hotel in St. Thomas, Nevada.] We made beds, cooked and waited on tables for this big restaurant. They went on a vacation. She had a bachelor brother [who] stayed and watched over us because we were young [girls]. There were a lot of tourists and all types, colors and kinds like there are today. I was always a little scared all my life. We grew up in a little town. I was afraid of a drunk and I was afraid of anybody [who] did not act just right. I prayed for protection a lot. We got along just fine. We had the time of our life.

Then I worked in homes for people in St. Thomas when their wives had their babies. I did their work until they were able to do that. I went to Cappelappa Ranch above Overton between Logandale [Nevada] and worked for the Marshall family. They had a big farm and hired a lot of farm help. My sister [Theresa

Gladys], older than I, worked there. She had me come and help her. We cooked and did the whole thing. Then she married and I [stayed on and] worked on. She lived a little way from where I worked so I went [there on] weekends or if I had a little time off and visited with her. But I was afraid to be in a room by myself. This family had just boys and then they had these boys and men in. They were all kind and good. I had no trouble getting along with any of them. But I locked my door and knelt down and prayed that I would be protected. This is the way I got along.

I was a greenhorn while I was working there. We had never had a telephone in our lives. Telephones came [here] a lot later. They had telephones there so one day I thought I would be kind of smart. I went to this old-type telephone and took down the receiver. I did not see if anybody was on the telephone. I just [said], "Hello, Central. Hello, give me Central," or some remark. They said, "We will give you hell if you do not get off this telephone." That almost scared the life out of me. [Laughter] I hung up and I did not try telephoning anymore [laughter] until the telephones came in. I was married when they came in here. I adjusted very well and had a lot of friends. I made friends, non-Mormon friends [and] Mormon friends in any place we have ever lived. I like people. I just do. Some way, unconsciously I make friends.

FH: How did you happen to get your husband?

VC: When I went to normal school at St. Thomas, I had to live with my sister in Kaolin [Nevada] part of the time. They moved from St. Thomas to Overton. We did not have any money to pay rent so I lived with my sister [Theresa Gladys] and rode the bus from Kaolin to Overton which was not many miles. My husband had a cousin [who] lived in Kaolin, a dark good-looking fellow. He started coming to see me. I liked him quite well, in a way. I still, back in my heart, wanted the other [fellow]. I wanted my husband. I started going with him. He took me to the dances a time or two and shows. We [became] quite serious.

[Inaudible] Before I started teaching, my sister [Leah] and I went to Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah] during the summer for a vacation. She paid the way and we went [to The Great] Saltair and [did] all those crazy things that I would not do again because I [was] so frightened. He wrote to me all the time and I was the one he wanted. When I came back to teach at [the] gyp camp, [David] Marriner [Cox] was working at gyp camp. [Glen] Lee, [who] was his cousin, came up to see me a time or two and he found out [that] he had written a letter that was real serious. I had written back expecting to marry him because I thought I had no chance. It was only a few nights after he found this out that he came to see me and he was ready to go steady.

FH: That helped a lot.

VC: I think it did. One time, before this, we were going steady when I was at St. Thomas going to normal [school] before I started going with his cousin. He was going steady with me. The girl I was rooming with, I was not rooming with her as a roommate, but we ate together in the same building. I had a room with another girl and she had a room with another girl. We were all going to school down there. All of a sudden this girl that he had been going with, [who] had a real case on him and everybody figured they were going to get married, came in one night and asked me [if she could] wear this suit, that my sister had sent me, up to see Marriner at the gyp camp. It was the only one I had. She went up there and spent all night up there. Before she came back, this girlfriend of mine in the same room and I wrote a letter to Marriner telling him: this was it, I had taken all I was going to take and I was through. I had someone else, anyway, that I could marry. I thought I could probably be happy because he was a good fellow, was his cousin and good-looking. My husband was one of the best looking [fellows] in the whole world, but [his cousin] was good-looking, too.

So I sent this letter out and he came when I happened to be home one night. He came and [took] me to the dance. He took my sister [Leah] first and went to the dance. I went to the dance and he met me there. That night he shed a few tears and told me that he was [very] sorry, that I was really the one he wanted, but he was not ready to get married at the time and that was why he was doing the things he was doing. He did not want to settle down because I would have married [him] any old time. [Laughter] So this is the way it happened. When he [was] ready to settle down, he came and worked [where] and I worked. I was teaching. At Christmastime we [were] married. This girl happened to be teaching in Bunkerville. We moved to Bunkerville before our first baby was born [and] I quit teaching.

FH: Where did you get married?

VC: We were first married in Las Vegas. We went on the train from Moapa [Nevada] down to Las Vegas and Bishop [inaudible] of Las Vegas married us there. We were married civilly first. We only had a little short time during Christmas vacation. Then Marriner had not been going to church a lot because he worked in the mining camps and smoked occasionally and drank a little occasionally like [fellows] do when they [are] out without a father and on their own. He had to prepare himself a little bit before we could go to the temple. We were married in the temple later. [Our] oldest daughter was about a year old [when] we went to the temple and had her sealed.

FH: Tell about your trip to the temple.

VC: I was elated because this is all that I wanted all my life. We were so happy that we had our baby and that we could go there and have her sealed for time and eternity to us [if] we kept the commandments and did what we should do in the gospel. I was not disappointed in the temple ceremony, but I wore somebody else's dress

which did not fit me as well. All my life this has been kind of a stigma. It bothered me which it should not have. I had not been back [until] years later. I have been back when my [children were] married in the temple and a time or two I have taken names and gone through, but not a lot.

One thing that I have had a little trouble with [is] people hurting me deeply. It is hard for me to get over this. So I have always felt that I was not really good enough to go to the temple. When you think about it, I keep *The Word of Wisdom*, I keep the Sabbath day holy, I do most of the things, only [there is] this one thing that I have a hard time with. Until I feel like I can get over this and go feeling good toward everyone, then I will go. Maybe that will be too late. I do not know.

FH: It will not be too late. It is never too late.

VC: I might go before I am ready. The Lord says we need to do this before we get exaltation.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VC: My oldest girl is LaRae [Cox]. She was the best child as far as obedience and kindness of any one of them. They are all good [children], but she never gave us one word of sass, [not] one word against us. Even though she might of, she never made it known. [She is] a good religious girl who has lived the gospel as near as anybody could. She married a young boy [Grant Dimick] who was a good boy. She married young.

FH: Is he a local boy?

VC: He is from Las Vegas and we lived in Las Vegas at the time. They married young. We were a little against that. We wanted her to go to school. He was going into the [United States] Navy. They lived together about five years and then he [was] accidentally killed. She is happy that she had those years with her first love. Then she came to live with us in Sacramento, California. We lived there a couple of years and she came there and stayed. She [had] a job in a long distance telephone office [like] she had worked some in [Las] Vegas. She was able to get a good job after she [recovered from] his death. It was about six months before she was able to go back to work. Then she went to church with us and went to work. [She] was not interested in anybody as far as a husband.

One day she came to me and said, "Mother, my girlfriend wants me to go on a blind date, but I am not interested." I said, "You should be interested. You are a young girl. You are old enough to take care of yourself. You know what is right and wrong, no matter who [he] is or what kind of a fellow. If you do not want to go again, you do not have to go again, but go just once and get away from only going to church and to work. You need this in your young life." Finally, one day she came home and said she guessed she would go. She happened to have gone

with Alden Smith [who] she married. It was not very long until she wrote me [that] the black wall had disappeared. I love Alden and I am going to marry him.

He does not belong to the church but she has always gone and taken her children. She had a girl by the first husband. [She] is married now and has a little baby boy.

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

VC: She married Alden Smith. He is not of the church, but he has no bad habits. He is a [very] good fellow. He has never belonged to any church. He is the only child [and] his parents are old now. They raised him well because of the way he does and lives. He has taken this older girl of hers all the way across the city to Mutual [and] to church. He has taken her to all the church activities because my daughter did not drive the car. They have this little girl of their own, Julie. He does the same way with her. He takes his wife to church and takes her to work and back.

I told her this morning, "You could not have found a better boy." I think he has had the lessons and I am sure someday he will come into the church. He does not say much. He is so devoted to his folks. He goes [to see them] every day. They are alone. His father has had a lot of operations, but he goes every day to their home and helps them. He stays with them when they need him to stay there. When he is on a trip over here, and he has always done this since they have been married, he telephones at every service station when he fills up. He telephones back to let them know he is alright and wants to know how they are getting along. Last night he telephoned them. He is going to telephone them again tonight to check and see if they are okay. He is okay. She raised an only child and she is afraid he will get killed or something.

FH: He is very considerate. That is a happy family.

VC: Yes, it is.

FH: Tell about your second child.

VC: He is a son named David Marriner Cox, [Jr.]. He lives in Las Vegas and is in the administration of a junior high school. [He is] very competent [and] very intelligent. He had a few more problems in life. He was not as obedient. It seems like when he was growing up he did everything opposite to what we wanted him to do. We had a little trouble with him of making him mind. He went out with crowds we did not want him to. I chased him every night and brought him home at a certain hour thinking this was the only way I [was] going to save him from the other way of the world. He resented it quite bit.

Even after we moved over here on the farm, his father did not move at first. He was working in [Las] Vegas and I came over with him. He was in third year high school and he went with a girl [from] Bunkerville. Every night he would go to see

her. Every night about eleven thirty, I would wake up. I would go to bed early because I worked hard. We had a farm over here [with] cows and I did most of the work at the time because my husband was ill from chlorine [gas from the] Basic [Magnesium Inc. complex] out there at the Henderson plant. So I would go after him every night, down to this girl's [house], about eleven o'clock. I would call from the gate and say, "Alright now, it is time you were coming home." He would always come. He did not like it sometimes, but he always came.

Then he went in the [United States] Army. He volunteered. He went to the Mississippi camp and was unhappy. He wrote us letters of how much he loved us. Then he went overseas when he was young, just [after] six months in the training camp. He was a technical sergeant with a lot of men under him, about thirty-five. [He was] in the [Battle of the] Bulge and all through World War II. He wrote us as often as he could, but always [wrote] how much he thought of us, what a prayer he had in his heart for us and for us to pray for him. He changed.

FH: He [was] away from home and realized what it all meant.

VC: This is right. Then he [was] wounded [at] the Bulge and they flew him to France and then to England. He was in the hospital [for] nine months.

FH: Do you know what hospital he was in?

VC: No, but he said you do not die in those hospitals in England.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VC: He is [very] active in the church. He is married [to Nola Leavitt] and has two boys. He was not [active] at first when he came back. He was not sure. He said, "They say ours is true and they say theirs is true. Now, how do you find out?" I said, "You do just like the Prophet Joseph Smith did. You ask of God and He will give it to you." Later, he went to the temple. He said, "Mother, I am going to wait so that when I go to the temple I am sure that I can keep the covenants, the things that the Lord requires of me." He has really done it. He is a good boy.

FH: Where is he living now?

VC: [He lives at] 1400 Franklin in Las Vegas.

FH: Does he have a family?

VC: He has two boys. One is [attending] the University of Utah [Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah in the] dental school, [not] married, and one boy fourteen years old.

FH: Tell about the third child.

VC: The third one is a boy, [Clark Cox]. He grew up a little mischievous, but nothing to give us a lot of trouble. He went through college at Occidental. This older boy [David Marriner] went to CSU, was student body president there and [received] his degree there. [This] boy went to Occidental [College in] Eagle Rock [California]. It was a Presbyterian Church school. He wanted to get into California and this was about the best way. The first year after he graduated he taught in Logandale, Nevada for our superintendent, Mr. Fish, but he could not make enough money. They were thrifty and had a baby. He had to go to work in the summer to pay off his grocery bills. There was not enough money.

[So] he went to Sacramento, California to teach. He taught in the elementary schools for quite awhile. Then he became an administrator in one of the schools. He married Irene Leavitt from Mesquite. They had three children. Something happened during the time. Another lady [Betty Jean (Buchanan) Yeakel] came along in his life and he divorced his wife and left three little [children] and took [a new wife] and her [children]. He moved from Sacramento out of all this mess. He went to Covina [California] and he [lives] there now. Since [this move], he [earned] his doctorate degree [and] he is looking for a superintendent [position].

He is [very efficient] in his administration. He is one of the most efficient administrators that I have ever observed. I might say that his wife was not a member of the church. Since he married her, she joined the church and her [children] have been baptized, the ones [who] are old enough. They have one little girl of their own. He is affiliated with the church in every way. They go to firesides [and] take part in everything. He waited three and a half years before they would even let him in the stake superintendency because he had not paid a full tithing. They do not do that over here. They let them go any old way they want, but down there they are [very] strict. He finally took his wife and went to the temple.

A lot of them said this was all showoff and so he said to me one day, "Mother, what do you think about it?" I said, "I will tell you what I think about it. The Lord says that He judges according to what He wants to judge and we are not the judge. He also says that we are held accountable for all the deeds that we do here, good or bad. Now, I would rather have you go to the temple and work in the church than be down in the gutter smoking, drinking and carousing. I do not know what the Lord will give you for forgiveness for the thing you did."

FH: Repentance is always available to anyone.

VC: This is right. I said, "He will also give you blessings for the good things you do." This is my belief. As bad as I hate it, I still think he is better off doing the things he is doing than doing something else that is against the church.

FH: He could have so easily gone the other way.

VC: This is right.

FH: Tell about [your] fourth child.

VC: It is a daughter and her name is Dora [Cox]. [She] is a good girl. They are all good [children, each with] a little different temperament. She grew up as a child [who] just looked at you and never gave you a minute's sass, but did not always move when you said anything. She looked at you. She was blunt. She married [Mervin Adams, whose] folks lived in Bunkerville. They were church people, but he had been [in] the [United States] Army and smoked a little. She always wanted to go to the temple. This was her plan because she grew up that way. The other [children] did, but she married this fellow and he did not take her to the temple. He proceeded to tell her afterwards that he was never going to take her to the temple. He quit smoking, but he was not going to the temple. He did not believe in the church that much. His father and his father's family were not very much [for] church. His mother was, but his father's family was not.

I [received] a letter from her one day from Sacramento, [where] they lived. She said she was leaving him. He would not promise to do this, he was not going, and that is what she had worked for all her life, so she was not staying with him. I sat down and wrote her a letter. I [wrote], "You tend to your business. You give that [boy] a chance." We go a long way sometimes to bring out the right things. She did not leave him because I told her she would not get to come home if she did. She would have to go somewhere else. Later on, he took her to the temple. It was not very long after that.

FH: That really paid off.

VC: That is right. They were married in the temple. They lived in Las Vegas and Sacramento. [When they lived] in Las Vegas he started working in the church. They put him in a position and he [was] interested and went to Priesthood first. Now, he is really working in the church. They moved over here to Bunkerville and they put him in as ward clerk. Now, they are in Idaho, but he still works a lot in the church. They have four children. They have an older girl [who] married a good boy [from] Mesquite. He is in the [United States] Army in West Germany right now, in the postal service. A few weeks ago she flew to West Germany to be with him the rest of [his] time. [Dora] has a boy [who] graduated from high school this year. He [was] given his patriarchal blessing last year. [It was] one of the most wonderful [ones that] I have ever heard of — the things he is going to accomplish if he lives the commandments. He is working toward a [LDS] mission and higher education. The things that he will accomplish through his education and through his mission are just beautiful. [Dora] [also] has two little ones. They had the grownup family and ten and a half years [later] they had their second family [of] which they are lucky. They have [had the] two little ones now for a long time. This one is their baby [showing a picture] and she is just darling. Isn't

she beautiful? They had her down here just a week or two ago. She is as sweet as sweet can be.

FH: [Who is your] fifth [child]?

VC: Our youngest girl, [Eleanor Cox] is talented. She does anything she wants to do because she knows she can do it. Right now, she is a decorator in San Jose [California] for Sears [Roebuck and Company in] the curtain department, and does a terrific job. She is just made for that sort of [work]. She goes into the homes and sells [items] by her personality and the way she meets people. She is a lot like I am, [in] meeting people. She married [very] young. The [children] all married young, eighteen [years old]. Only the oldest boy was nineteen [years old]. She married a Hafen boy [Maxwell Kent "Tim" Hafen] over here. [He has] good parents. The [boy] was not too religiously inclined himself. He worked in the Sunday school after they were married here and did a fine job.

Then his dad set him up at Pahrump, Nevada, out from [Las] Vegas [and] over the mountain, on a big ranch. For six or seven years they [lived] out there and worked their heart out to make this ranch [a success]. She worked right along with him. They had a beautiful [farm] going, [raising] cotton. They had three nice children. Then things went wrong. He [had] quite a lot of money and he [came] to the point where he did not want to work. He wanted to boss the job. This second girl's [Dora] husband [Mervin] went in with him on "Tim's" own terms. This did not work out. They [the Hafens] pushed him out without what was coming to him, really. He [became] mean with the daughter [Eleanor] and they had troubles. [Eleanor] finally divorced him and left him.

He is [very] unhappy about it now, so he tells my oldest son. He married a girl that would not do a thing and my daughter had worked and made such beautiful yards. So they are separated [divorced]. I telephoned her this morning in San Jose because I worry about her. She is not married now. She is a good girl. Deep in her heart she is one of the best [children] that ever grew up.

FH: If she will be patient, that will work out.

VC: She is going with a fellow, not of the church, now. He is older and has a good business. [Her] one girl [who has] met him thinks he is a [very] good fellow. She does not know whether to marry him in June or not. I told her not to get mixed up in it anymore. She is young and has always liked attention. She needs somebody to pay attention to her. I do not know how it is going to work out. They are all wonderful [children]. She has a [very] good heart underneath. With me, through the years when I was ill, she was a little more sympathetic, maybe, than the rest. She came and did my [house] work. Of course, she lived close. She did the work and when I would come home from school so ill [and] so tired, I would open the door and it was just like a fairy had been there. Everything was spic and span. I

would sit down and cry about it. [She has] a [very] good heart. Just [started] out wrong.

FH: This happens.

VC: This happened in one year with me. Divorce was the last thing I ever wanted. [Emotional] They are all good [children].

FH: I think you will find that this will all find its way.

VC: They are raising good grandchildren too, every one of them. They are good [children]. [Emotional]

FH: Talk about your own life since you were married. Where did you go to live?

VC: First, I was teaching at the gyp camp which is just up above Glendale on Highway 91. We lived there until school was out. Then he [continued to] work there because the plaster mine was going. We lived there a year or two. Then we moved to Las Vegas. They used to have the railroad shops in [Las] Vegas and he worked as a blacksmith and as a pipe-fitter. He worked in other jobs for people [who] really knew the trade and learned a lot through this. He had a lot of friends, even Negro and Mexican friends, and worked all through his life with people [who] have always been [very] friendly with him.

We lived in a lot of places. We moved a lot of times. Even in [Las] Vegas we moved from one house to another trying to find a better home, a nicer home for the money we had to spend. Finally, he [hired] on the State Highway of Nevada in Las Vegas. For fifteen years he worked steady [for] the state highway [department]. [Inaudible] The gyp camp had a headquarters there and he worked out this way and that way. The [children] all grew up in Las Vegas. They were born in Bunkerville and in St. George and we lived around here and the gyp camp. But then we took them and went to [Las] Vegas and they all grew up and went to school there. They had good teachers and [a good] education.

He worked for the highway [department] for fifteen years steady there [in] Glendale and Las Vegas. He always wanted to farm. After that time, I gave in. I never wanted to farm because I had had a lot of farming experience. It is hard work and you do not get much out of it. I was tired of farming, but I go where my husband wants to go. It was the time that the boom had started in [Las] Vegas and we happened to have two homes that we had bought in the meantime and paid for at \$10.00 a month. We sold the homes and moved onto the farm and have been here ever since on [this] place.

When we first came, we lived in Bunkerville and bought a couple of homes down there [with] a lot of land. My sister, in Sacramento, wanted us to come there. It was a wonderful ranch and cheap. So we went to Sacramento and we [had a] dairy

on a ranch about twelve miles out of Sacramento in the valley. We made a lot of money. We had a good place, but my husband did not like the rain, the mud and [what] he had to contend with there. [There were no] oiled roads to the ranch and things like that. So he sold it to people who were not too good and we lost a lot of money on it. We moved back here, again, and we have been here since.

FH: Are you farming your father's farm?

VC: We have our old farm; we bought it back. I like it, only it is a lot of hard work. I went back to teaching and he went to work in [the] maintenance [department] at the school. We both worked at the school and both have [a] good retirement now with [our] Social Security. We rent [a] home on the farm.

FH: Has it been a blessing that you came here?

VC: In a way, yes, on account of the retirement that we need very badly now.

FH: This place you are in living in is so comfortable and nice.

VC: It is. We figured when we retired we would [move] around St. George. So, quite a few years ago, we bought a home in St. George, three bedrooms with all good floors, a [very] nice little place. He [had] worked two jobs all the time. He worked the farm and worked the lime mine. He worked on construction until he [began] the school job and then he worked the farm, too. We had fifteen acres below this that he also ran. He has worked [very] hard. We are tired now. We bought this home in St. George and we were going to go up on weekends. We moved some of our excess furniture and went on weekends. [We] spent Saturday and Sunday in St. George and went to church up there for a year or two. Then somebody wanted to rent [the house]. They said they would stay two or three years and so we rented it. They tore it down and moved out in a month or two. So we sold it. We [had] a chance to sell it for cash to one of our friends from Bunkerville. He lived up at St. George and was buying apartments and [houses] and renting them — making his money that way. So we sold it to him [and] we went on.

We did not get a chance to sell our place [Bunkerville-Mesquite property near the bridge]. We wanted to sell it because we wanted to retire and go somewhere off the farm. It is hard work. Our son-in-law, Mervin Adams, [who] married our second daughter, came back to Bunkerville and he kind of talked of buying the place. So we went looking for homes again around St. George. We bought a home over in Washington [City, Washington County, Utah]. We did the same thing for about three years — went up on weekends, rested and came back. We have done this a lot because he likes to go over the mountains. He likes to get away. So we would go up there and buy our groceries, buy clothes and come back. We always had to come back. Then we had a place to stay overnight and we went to the [inaudible]. We liked it a lot.

We had such a small lot that we wanted a larger one because he has a horse. He has always had horses and wanted two horses so I could ride. So we went looking for a larger lot. The lots were \$3,000.00 for a little three-cornered one, no water on half of them. I said, "We will never pay \$3,000.00 for a horse lot. We will get rid of the horse before we will do that." So we went over to Hurricane [Washington County, Utah]. We saw these beautiful homes out in the field here with big lots and delicious apple trees on [them]. So we bought a home. We sold a home in Washington [City] and bought a home in Hurricane. One morning he was not satisfied and didn't want to live in Hurricane. We bought a trailer and moved back here.

FH: Do you still have your place in Hurricane?

VC: Yes. We have about eight more years [of] payments from [the] Washington [house] coming to us. With our retirement, we have a lot of money to live on, but too much to take care of. I am tired and so is he.

FH: With all this experience, do you feel like you have learned anything?

VC: I learn every day.

FH: Have you really learned some lessons from life?

VC: This is right. I have learned one thing — you keep going no matter what. I have faith that we have our health. We can still make it. Now a time or two my husband, when he lost his money in California, a lot of it, did not work for two years. On top of that we came over here and dairied and went in debt a lot. We paid it off quickly by scrimping. Then he went into range cattle— feeding out [getting them ready for market]. He bought them at \$.36 a pound. We feed them seventy tons of chopped hay, all our pasture, and what milo and grain that we raised on our place. We always raised enough to feed our cattle.

FH: Was that the only way you could make money?

VC: This is right. When we went to sell them they were \$.12 to \$.14 [a pound so we lost everything. We had enough money from the sale of our other cows and [stock] that we did not owe anybody, but it took all the money we had. He [is] discouraged very quickly. He has had the worst trouble of anybody in the world. This is the way he gets. So for two years he did not do anything. All this time I was saying, "We have our health." He was ready to quit. I said, "We cannot quit. You do not say we quit and quit. We have our health, we have our farm [and] we have intelligence so we are going to start over again."

I started teaching and he started working on the [farm] a little and [for others who needed help] here and there. This has taught me that we work for what we get. All our lives we worked and I have been [very] happy all my life [and] all the work

that I have ever done. I have been happy that we kept on working, we never gave up. I taught the Sunday school lesson on baptism last Sunday where I said to the [children], "These businessmen that forget the past and start with a rebirth, like when you are baptized, are the people that are happy. They are people who have learned the lesson of life."

FH: What would you like to tell your descendants by way of counsel, your children, and their children?

VC: They are all good workers. I [do] not have a child [who] does not work like we have worked. They keep up their homes and they are perfect this way. I think this is the most important thing.

FH: Are you proud of them?

VC: I am [very] proud of all my [children]. They are good [children]. They are good workers. They get jobs other places and they keep their jobs. They get promoted because they work on the job instead of taking coffee breaks and spending more time than they should. I only say that I hope that their [children] go on working and working in the church and believing in the gospel because this is the main thing.

FH: Do you have a testimony?

VC: I have a testimony, one of the strongest.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VC: Yes, I have a testimony of the gospel. It is strong because I have had to depend a lot of times on prayer and administration for my life. [Emotional] I have been to the point of death a number of times in the hospital [when] the doctor said I could not live. I said to my husband, "You bring in the elders or somebody to administer to me because I know that God lives and answers my prayer. If this is my time to go, alright. If it is not, He will heal me."

When I retired a couple of years ago, I had a nervous breakdown. I went in [to St. George] and vomited for three and a half days. The doctor [gave] me [a] shot and [some] medicine, all they could dare give me. Yet it did not help me. Finally, I said to my husband, "You go to St. George." He has a lot of relatives, the Cox people, and they are all good people. I said, "You find somebody to administer to me because this is all that will help me. I just cannot take this any longer." [Emotional] He went up the hall and went by the men's ward and here were two gentlemen he had never seen before. They consented to come down and give me a blessing. The minute they took their hands off my head I started vomiting. I had vomited so much I did not think I had anything left. I vomited excessively for quite a little while. They gave me tests. I [drank] this milk [liquid] to do these

tests and not once [since] have I vomited. I have been nervous since and have failed, but not once have I vomited since that time. They promised me that I would live and this is my testimony. The first time [the doctor said] I had cancer, and I did not have it. This was a miracle.

FH: Do you mean after they administered, it was not there anymore?

VC: This was that first time I told you about being in the hospital.

FH: [Was this] with the prayer circles?

VC: This time it was a miracle because the doctor said it looked like it, it was cut like it was cancer, but it was not cancer. When the tests came back from Salt Lake [City] it was not cancer. They gave me up to not live.

I could not do anything only I have a testimony. I could not deny it for one minute. I only hope with all the reverses and with all the hurt I get, that I will be strong enough to endure to the end.

[END OF RECORDING THREE. END OF INTERVIEW.]