

Interview with
GLENN WILCOX STEED

January 9, 1969

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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GLENN WILCOX STEED

Glenn Wilcox Steed was interviewed on January 9, 1969 in Rockville, 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 and Nevada.

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

GS: [My name is] Glenn Wilcox Steed. My mother's maiden name was Wilcox.

FH: [What is] your birth date?

GS: [I was born] July 26, 1896.

FH: [Where were] you born?

GS: [I was born in] Farmington [Davis County] Utah.

FH: What was your father's name?

GS: [His name was] Walter William Steed.

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

GS: [Her name was] Julia Marie (Wilcox) [Steed].

FH: [What can] you remember from your early childhood?

GS: There were no doctors in those days and mother said that I was [an] unusually large [baby]. I weighed about thirteen pounds and I guess she had a bad [delivery] time. She said that the night I was born she woke up and noticed dampness and became suspicious. [She] examined closer and [found] that the navel cord hadn't been properly tied and I was bleeding to death. She noticed that my hands and feet had turned purple. So I came [close] to passing out of the picture before I [ever] started. [Laughter]

FH: You had a good start at thirteen pounds.

GS: I was tremendously large, but I had a wonderful mother. We had a nice home in Farmington, Utah. It is still standing, by the way. I was a rather difficult child. I wouldn't say ambitious, but I seemed to get in more than my share of mischief. They use to tie me up [as] I remember. I remember my brother, Walter [William Steed, Jr.] had a rocking horse that father had given him. It was wonderful for those days. I thought it was terrible that the horse should stay saddled all the time

[and] never have the saddle taken off. So I got a hammer and proceeded to take the saddle off the rocking horse. It was terrible [looking] by the time they found it. [Laughter]

On another occasion I went down to my aunt Tillie Steed's [home]. She had a boy, Rural [Steed], who was a year older than me. We used to get into a number of difficulties. This particular day he was telling me that they had a bunch of matches with red-heads. They would pop when you hit them. He [took] a hand full of these [matches] and we went up on the hill, east of their place where the school building is in Farmington now. We put the matches on a rock and threw rocks at them. When the rock would hit them they would pop. Before this, they used sulfur matches. They would come in a bunch and you would pull them apart. They would start lifeless like, but these [matches] had a lot of pep. We were there doing this when, all of a sudden, one of the heads flew into some cheat grass that was dry and it started to spread. We threw rocks at it as [youngsters]; I was about five or six years old. I know it was before I started school. We put [the fire] out the best we could, but we could see that it was getting away from us so we ran and hid. The whole town turned out. It looked like it was going to burn the place down. They pulled all the water from one or two wells to put it out. They found out that we were the cause of it so mother took me home and locked me in the bathroom. We had one of the first bathrooms in Farmington, the first bathtub in town and the first piano. Anyway, she locked me in the bathroom. I was in there some time [before I] found out that if I climbed up on the bathtub I could climb out the window, which I did. [Laughter] I didn't dare come home that night. They had to hunt me down and found me, of course. Those are a couple of the depredations that I got into as a [very] small youngster [Laughter].

When I was about five years old, we moved to Syracuse [Davis County, Utah]. They called it the Sand Ridge in those days. Father had a piece of ground, eighty acres, [he purchased] several years before. We moved there and he built a lovely home for mother. I was around that area until I was about fifteen [years old]. Father bought a home in Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah] for the [children] to go to school. [It was on] 386 D Street. I [went to] the seventh grade.

FH: [Had] you gone to school [earlier]?

GS: Yes, we went to school [in Syracuse]. I didn't take to [like] school too well. We had a little schoolhouse in the lower southwest part of Syracuse. Miss Peachem was the first teacher I had and she didn't like me a bit. I used to clasp my hands [behind] my head and she didn't like that at all. In fact, she didn't like me at all. They built a branch of the short-line railroad down to the [Great Salt] Lake to get salt from a couple of salt works [mines] there. The train would come down sometimes every day [or] sometimes once a week. They had a water tank at the old cannery and they used to stop and fill their tender [tank] with water. We would all go there if we heard the train coming [and] it was about noon. [Then we] would try to make it back for school in time for the one o'clock bell. I seemed

to be pretty much alone myself so if I had a rough morning, I wouldn't bother to go back to school. [Laughter] They really had a time keeping me in school.

Later, when I was in the second grade, a boy accused me of stealing his marbles. Eugene Page was his name. I couldn't stand that, so he and I got into [a fight] and I bloodied his nose. He told the teacher and she expelled me from school. When I got home, father felt that I should be punished, not only from the teacher's stand point, but that I knew better. He couldn't stand for that kind of behavior on my part. He said that if it happened again he would trash me good. In those days, we didn't have centralization in the school; we had our own individual trustees in the community. He took me to see each of them [and] there were three of them. I apologized to them. Then he took me and I apologized to the teacher. The trustees prevailed on the teacher to let me back in school. Those were the worst things that I had to put up with [at] school

In the seventh grade I got along well in school in Salt Lake City. Miss Young was the teacher and she was a splendid teacher. I [was] homesick and anxious to get back [to Syracuse] even though I knew I would have to work. The circus came to town in Salt Lake [City] and, of course, it was a big event. In those days they had a big parade to show off the animals, actors and actresses. I visited the circus and then picked up and went home. The weather in April was such that we could be on the farm working the ground. Father never complained about my coming, he just put [me] to work and that was it. [Laughter] I went back to school at home the next year under Ella Pullman. She put me in the eighth grade and I finished along with those I had been going to school with and [received] my diploma. I finished my grade school and the next year I went to the LDS [Latter- day Saint] High School in Salt Lake City, Utah and finished high school. Then I was called on a [LDS] mission

I was called in November to go on a mission; I left November 8, 1916. We were quite a sight for sore eyes. There were a couple of boys from Idaho and an [Elder] Fisher from Salt Lake City and Sister Thomas from Plain City [Weber County, Utah]. She was a spinster. We had all been raised out in the wilds more or less. [When] we got to Chicago, Illinois, one of the elders had a cousin [there]. He had notified him of when we would be there and he met us at the LaSalle Street Station and we got on the first elevator we had ever ridden. We were amazed that in the afternoon there was two or three school [students] with their books [that] were only nine or ten years old, got on [the elevator]. [They] seemed to know their way about and it amazed us. After looking us over, one of the shavers [students] stood up to me and said, "What is it mister, did the circus come to town?" [Laughter] You could tell what we looked like.

We spent a few days in Chicago and got out to see the town. We were used to getting around on horseback so the mechanized business had us confused. We started walking. Elder [George] Bitter from Beaver Dam [Arizona], one other elder and myself, got our directions twisted and we walked until late in the night

before we found our way back to where we were [staying]. [We] had to get the landlady up to let us in. She had met us that afternoon and recognized us. [She] wondered where we were and let us in so that we finally [retired] for the night.

We went on to New York City [New York] having been called to the Eastern States Mission. I think The Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] headquarters was on 133 Street at that time. Elder Bitter and I were sent down to the Northwest Virginia Conference with headquarters in Fairmont, West Virginia. I spent a couple of years there roaming the hills [of] West Virginia. In the winter we would work the towns and in the summer we would go out without purse or script and try [to] live off the land. Sometimes we were lucky and [could] get green apples. [Laughter] We met a lot of fine people. We had a little church at what is called Smith Creek now, a short distance from Franklin, West Virginia. In the spring and fall we would make the trek from wherever we were [during] the winter or summer for conference. We would always have a nice time getting together to talk about our experiences.

I remember one time we were having a baptismal service; there were two or three people being baptized. I thought it was a good idea to have a general airing [meeting]. We tried to get the word around and started before the baptism. There must have been 100 to 150 people gathered. They called on an Elder Neilson from Canada to give a talk before the baptismal service. He got up and got really excited, was quite enthusiastic about his talk. He said, "Persecution, we thrive on it, we invite it." When he was finished, they called on Elder Wilkerson from Lovell, Wyoming to give the prayer. While he was praying, someone hit him in the forehead with a rock. [Laughter] He went up to Elder Nielson afterwards and said that it was alright for him [to] brag about thriving on persecution, but he would like him to take it, not have it passed on. [Laughter]

It was while laboring in Clarksburg [West Virginia] that I met my wife. We had three elders there at the time. Elder Pace was our conference president, they called them conferences in those days. He had received word that there would be two lady missionaries. One would stay with us and the other would go to the Southwest Virginia Conference [with] headquarters in Charleston, West Virginia. We [received] the word that they would be there on a certain train at a certain time. The conference president and I went down and met the train that they should be on, but no lady missionaries were on it. We asked about other trains and they said that there [were] no others coming from that area. We went home and decided that something must have come up that they [were not able] to make it.

The next morning we were holding church; we had a hall rented over a café. We had to go down early in the morning and sweep out the cigarette butts, carry out the spittoons and get ready to hold church. We had seven or eight people who always came to church. While I was giving the lesson, we heard a commotion at the door. There was a little hole in the door that you could push open to see if you wanted to let the people in for the lodge. We notice that it moved and in came the

two lady missionaries. One of them was Della [Elizabeth] McCune and the other was a Sister Snow from Snowflake, Arizona.

FH: You were, of course, unable to do anything about [courting] this girl in the mission field. [You] couldn't and probably didn't want to.

GS: No, we abided by mission rules. I wasn't thinking about girls anyway and she wasn't thinking about boys necessarily. There was Ida Hunsaker there from Ogden, Utah, before the girls came. She heard us tell about going through the Smoke Holes on our way down to the church in Ziegler [West Virginia]. She tried to get the conference president to let them go with some of the elders down through the Smoke Holes. He said absolutely not, he wouldn't think of it. He had never been there himself, but he had heard us tell of them. I had been down two or three times.

[The Smoke Hole region represents approximately forty square miles of the Spruce Knob Seneca Rocks National Recreational Area with the Monongahela National Forest in West Virginia. The Smoke Holes are dissected by the pirated South Branch of the Potomac River which flows north-northeastward through a narrow gorge for the entire length of the region, thus the term Smoke Hole Canyon.]

When President [Walter P.] Monson, our mission president, came down to the conference, the girls asked him if they could go through the Smoke Holes with some of the elders. He said that he thought it would be wonderful, that those people had never seen any ladies from the outside world. He thought it would be a splendid [event]. There was nothing we could do, but try to take them through. [Since] I had been through several times, the conference president asked if I would [take] them through. When the weather broke and it was time for us to meet for conference at Ziegler, we started on this [journey] which [would] be like 150 miles. We went as far as we could on the railroad to Petersburg, West Virginia.

There, we had friends named Winston Shirt and family who were not members of the church, but always treated us wonderfully when we went through. They always expected us to stop and [we] were welcomed [to] stay as long as we could. When we got off the train at Petersburg we stayed in the hotel that night and the next day we started for the Shirt's [place] down on the a little creek that ran into the South Fork of the Potomac River.

We had quite an experience on the way down [traveling] on a wagon road that wasn't [used] very much. There were no cars in that area and on the way down we had to cross part of the river to follow the trail. The water was quite smooth and there was a boat to take [across], but no one around. We decided that maybe it was alright if we took the boat across. Maybe someone would show up in the meantime.

Neither Pace or I had any experience with a boat. We thought: all you had to do was go straight across the river. It looked calm enough. When we [were] out a ways, there was an undertow and we couldn't hold it. [The boat] was going on down the stream. There were rapids and it got thin enough that I was holding with the oars to catch something. Pace jumped out in the river and held the boat and a fellow came walking through the woods and saw the predicament. He was the man who owned the boat and he came to the rescue. We got [the boat] off the rocks and he took us up around. He knew how far to go to get us to the other side. He was very nice about it. He didn't hold any feelings against us for taking the boat. He said we needed to have a little more experience before we went out on our own. [Laughter]

We had one creek to cross that flowed very rapidly and we had to wade through it. It was fairly early in the spring [and] the creeks were all a little higher than they would be in the summer. The girls thought it was terrible. They wouldn't raise their skirts much above their ankles. We told them we couldn't carry them across because it was too dangerous. The rocks were coated with moss and they were [so] slick that we couldn't stand up [very] good. They finally got brave enough to hold up their dresses. When they hit the depth of the water, we had to hang on to them to keep them steady in the middle of the creek. Pace slipped off a rock. He had his shoes tied together and over his shoulder. I had to take the lady missionary on across while he went after his shoes. As soon as I got her across safely, I went to help him. We caught them on down the stream a ways. It would have been [bad to] not have had any shoes in that rocky country.

We finally got across alright and to the Shirts. They [were not] expecting us. They had to use a boat to get across the creek from the trail. I whistled and the youngest of four boys came over in the boat. I called him by name. I remembered him and he knew me. [He] loaded us in the boat and they met our host and hostess, the Shirts. I don't think she had had anyone call on her in months; she was just there with these men. They would [go] away possum hunting or coon hunting. They would meet at an inn, but she would never go to town. If they needed a jacket or anything, they would send to Sears, Roebuck [and Co.] or Montgomery Ward for it. She treated the girls the best she knew how. She was a good cook for being back in the hills [and] always fed us well. We got along fine from that angle and the girls helped her with her sewing.

We stayed there two or three days and enjoyed it immensely. Then [we] went on to Ketterman [West Virginia] right in the middle of Smoke Hole country. John Self, at Ketterman, had a wagon in order to get to Petersburg to buy [items] for the store. By the way, half of the space in his store was filled with snuff and dry goods. He didn't carry groceries. In order to get his wagon to Petersburg, he had to ford the south fork of the Potomac [River] fifteen times. You can see that it was really back in the hill country.

They called it the Smoke Hills because it was so removed from any course of travel that, during the Civil War, there would be deserters and guerilla groups who [went] back in there. There were salt peter mines in there and they would mold their bullets. You could look across the country and see a swirl of smoke and knew there was someone [in] there, but it was rather risky to go and see who. They called it the Smoke Holes for that reason. So this country was rough this way.

The river itself left quite a wide open valley that they formed. It was good farm land. For some reason it [the river] cut to the side and went right through the mountains for a distance of fifteen or twenty miles and back out to the valley again. That was the Smoke Hole country.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

GS: We went up to Ketterman and left the ladies with several other families there who were members of the church. We left the ladies with John Self where the store was and went on up the country to stay with [others]. I knew all these people. They were quite suspicious until I knew them by name and would tell them of trips we had in the past, and then they welcomed us. World War I was on at the time and they [had] the idea that we might be German spies, if you can imagine that. There would be no reason for them to go in there, but it [was] rumored that we might be.

The girls were not used to that kind of living. One daughter of John Self wanted to make a dress, [because] she was thinking about getting married. The only way they [could] marry [was] when the circuit-rider [minister] came through. He came through once every two or three months and [would] patch up whatever things they needed. Other than that it was only the Mormon elders who came through. She was thinking of getting married and wanted to know if they [the girls] would help her with a dress. They were amazed to find that the dress she had on was sewn right on her body. They just laid cloth on [her] and sewed it together. They didn't worry about body odor; you got used to that. It was a country [area] where they didn't have a remedy for bed bugs and they were terrible. We [thought] we would get eaten up [by the time] we [were] through there. The girls were amazed when they saw the bed bugs, not only on the bottom, but they saw them drop from the ceiling too. [Laughter] They knew where to go above you and where to fall to get [on] your body.

Whenever we went through there, we had to sing until we couldn't sing anymore. They loved to have us sing. We always held meetings, they called it, gatherings. They had to hear some preaching. They passed out the word through grapevines which were quite effective. The people lived back in the woods and to go in there and try to find the people, unless you knew the trails, you would be at a loss. You wouldn't know where to go or how to find them. As I said before, there weren't any roads that went through. You would see a road going up a steep hill and think

that no one lived up in that country [area], but you would find them here and there. Word went out like wild fire and that evening they came down and gathered around and listened to them sing until they couldn't sing anymore.

We were gone and the next night we were to hold a meeting at what had been the school house, but the wind had blown the roof off. We were there under the stars, but we held a meeting. My wife [Della Elizabeth (McCune) Steed], to this day, tells about a little old lady in her eighties. She didn't know [exactly] how old she was, but knew she was over eighty [years old]. They didn't pay much attention to birthdays; every day was about the same. My wife [said] she had an apron with a pocket [and] she turned [the apron] inside out so she could carry her tobacco in her pocket. Of course, they tried to be very careful when we were around. They wanted to live *The Word of Wisdom*, but they always had [tobacco] around. It was always home spun except the snuff. In this case, the little old lady wanted the home spun. She didn't have any teeth, so she had to grip it between her gums and start twisting until it would let go, get some off, then wallow it around in her mouth until she got out of it what she wanted and then spit it out. This little old lady would walk up this hill on the way to church. [The] next night [she] would walk away and say she just had to blow so she would stop and rest awhile, then on she would go. They turned out wonderfully.

We found one lady there whose husband was a Civil War veteran. He was sick when we were there the fall before. During the winter he died and they buried him. The next spring she wanted us to hold a funeral so we did. Elder Pace and I, at the place we stayed, felt like we were moving in the night [because of bed bugs]. We had a few matches and one of us held the matches while the other killed the bed bugs with paper. They were terribly thick. I don't see how the people stood it. They were squirting on me all the time. There wouldn't be a night that they wouldn't work on us.

We spent several days there and finally worked our way by way of Upper Track [West Virginia]. We met the highway when we got out on the river. The road the mail that came through [on] every day [went] down to Franklin [West Virginia]. [We] had seven miles to walk from Franklin to Ziegler. We had a number of families there who were wonderful people. They [would] give us the last thing they had and treated us royally. We held conference there and Della [Elizabeth] McCune got sick. The roughage [on the trip] through the Smoke Holes was too much for her digestive system and she couldn't take it.

While [we] were there, [we were aware] of conditions [and how the] people were desperately poor. The men would get a little flour by going out in the valley to work for \$.50 a day. That is still biscuit country down there and they had to have biscuits for every meal. I remember one family who were not good cooks, but I know they did the very best they could, so I [do not] say this to make light of them, but when you would break open one of their biscuits they would be grey in color and would be pretty heavy. One of the elders started to lift up one of these

plates of biscuits. [Laughter] He turned to his companion and said, "Buddy, would you mind helping me, just a little bit, [to] move these over." They were wonderful people and would treat you the very best they knew how. They didn't know any better. We went back to visit them years [later]. They have a road through there so they are much better off now than they were.

FH: Have they become more modern?

GS: Yes. We [went] down to Ziegler and Sister McCune was sick. She was there for two or three weeks. We had to get the doctor from Franklin. He was a plain old country doctor, but he was a fine old fellow and did a good job. He hitched right up there [on] horseback and brought her out of it, [although it] took quite awhile. I remember he came one time and asked how she was doing with the medicine. He said she had forgotten to take some of it and he said, "That is the sign I like. When my patients start to forget their medicine I know they are getting better." It was a good country philosophy.

FH: You finished your mission, I presume, [and received] an honorable release.

GS: Yes.

FH: Is there anything else you would like to tell about your mission?

GS: After two years in West Virginia I was transferred to Vermont and spent five months there. [The] headquarters were in Burlington [Vermont] on Lake Champlain. [I] went to Barre [Vermont] and was there off and on for awhile. They sent Elder Anderson and me down to Bennington [Vermont] for two or three months. Afterwards, we were released and came home. The flu [1918 influenza epidemic] was pretty bad and when we [arrived] home they didn't even have conference that spring. On the way home we visited the Hill Cumorah [Pageant in New York] and enjoyed the trip there very much.

FH: [When] you came home and [World] War [I] was on, did you go back to work for your father?

GS: No, I went to work for my brother, Walter [Steed], for the spring, farming. My brother was [working at] the bank in Clearfield [Davis County, Utah]. He had a farm and I was doing the hand work [there]. Then I went to work for a brother-in-law until beet harvest [time] when I went to work for the Layton Sugar Factory at one of their loading depots in Syracuse [Davis County, Utah]. I worked for them until we [were] married.

FH: What do you remember about your father?

GS: Father was a person who [did not] have a lot of [education], but he was self-educated. He could figure, could read very well and was a natural philosopher. He was gifted in being able to figure and help others. He lived a very rugged life. He

worked with his own father on the farm in Farmington until he was twenty [years old]. Then he [told] his father that he would like to go out and earn some money because he knew a girl he would like to marry. His father said, "Alright son, if that is what you would like to do. You go, just so you are back to help with the harvest." So that is what he did for about eight months. It must have been fall when he went. He said he worked for \$5.00 a week and saved enough money so that [he] could marry my mother. He said they rented for awhile and the rent was \$4.00 or \$5.00 a month. He couldn't stand to see that [much money] going out for rent, so as soon as he could, he [bought] a little place. He worked and finally got into the sheep business. [He] had a couple herds of sheep that he ran in Wyoming and Idaho. He followed those for several years until the panic of 1893. He said he was a good Democrat until Grover "Clever" [Cleveland] [was elected president] and took the duty off of [inaudible]. [It] busted him flat and [he] was a good Republican after that. [Laughter] He [had] eighty acres of ground in Syracuse and farmed it intensely [with] my mother.

There is an item or two that I would like to tell you about my grandfather, my father's father, [Thomas "Tom" Joseph Steed]. Grandfather was just a little fellow [and] was quite unusual. He [lived] in England and one day in 1840 his sister came down to the field where he was working in the hay. [She] said that there was a religious meeting at their father's home that night. He was still living at home. She said that one of the modern twelve apostles [would] talk to them. He said that that was quite a surprise to him because he hadn't heard of any apostles in this day and age. It turned out to be Wilford Woodruff.

He said they had a wonderful meeting and he was convinced that what he was saying was the truth. Grandfather had tried to find out something about the truth. He had asked different religious persons if they knew if the Savior still lived, if He did, where was He? It was rather a large question for a youngster. Anyway, he was convinced that Wilford Woodruff was telling the truth. At seventeen [years of age] he joined the church and eventually came to Nauvoo [Illinois] about [the] time [of] the trouble. He said when they arrived there, the Prophet Joseph [Smith] met them and shook hands with each of them, but he had an appointment and had to leave. He left Apostle George A. Smith to talk to them. Grandfather said that the moment he saw the prophet, he knew he was the prophet. He said after hearing him talk, he heard him talk several times, he was entirely convinced he was the prophet of the Lord and that it was the truth. He was grateful for that privilege as long as he lived.

After settling in Farmington, father said they were working in the wheat field one day tying up wheat. They used the cradle in those days [to] twist some of the straw together and tie the bundles. He said a big fellow on fine horseback come riding right at grandfather. Here was grandfather, just a little Englishman, but he didn't budge an inch. He said the man could have run over him, but he wouldn't have budged. He was that way. The man stopped right at grandfather. He said the horse's nose was right at grandfather. The man jumped off and said, "Are you

“Tom” Steed?” He was a big six-footer looking right down in grandfather’s face and grandfather was looking up at him. He said, “I am Lott Smith. I bought some land next to you and I want to buy some of your land.” Grandfather said, “It isn’t for sale. I am not selling any land.” Lott [was] kind of overbearing and got to where he couldn’t stand it and spit down in grandfather’s face. [Laughter] Grandfather became a human dynamo. He grabbed Lott by his red whiskers and pulled him down and spit and spit and spit in Lott’s face. He wasn’t afraid of him! [Laughter]

Another incident: [Grandfather] had an extra house. [He] became fairly well-to-do before he got through. He brought in the first grist mill and I believe the first sawmill. [Anyway], he had an extra house there and it was empty. A fellow wanted to rent it. He said it was for rent and so he paid the first month’s rent. Awhile after that, another fellow came and said, “Brother Steed, I never thought you would rent your house to someone to open a saloon.” Grandfather said, “I didn’t.” He said, “You rented your house, didn’t you?” Grandfather said, “Yes, I rented my house, but the man didn’t say he was going to use it for a saloon.” He said, “Well, that is what he is going to do with it. He is talking all over town that that is what he is going to do with it.” Grandfather said, “No, he isn’t going to use my house for a saloon.” He said, “That is what he is going to do.” Grandfather said, “I will see about that.” So he went to the man and said, “They tell me you are going to put a saloon in that house?” He said, “That is right.” Grandfather said, “You are not going to do that with my house.” He said, “I sure am. I don’t see what you can do about it. You [received] your rent, didn’t you?” He said, “Yes, I [received] my rent, but it wasn’t for a saloon.” He said, “What can you do? It is rented.” Grandfather said, “If I can’t do anything else, I will burn it down.” He said, “You wouldn’t burn it down.” Grandfather said, “You try me and see. You are not going to put a saloon in that house.” The man was convinced and gave him back his money. That was the kind of fellow grandfather was.

FH: [He] had a lot of character. Tell about your mother.

GS: Mother was unusual. She had a mother [Anna Maria (Robinson) Steed] who was [a] semi-invalid and she [mother] was the oldest [child]. There was only [one] girl in the family, but there were a number of boys. Mother didn’t get a chance for much [education]. She had very little [education as] she had to stay [home] and help take care of [my] grandmother. Mother was unusual in that she was self-educated. She did quite a bit of reading and was [very] adapt [at] spelling. Even though [her [children] had more [education], we always went to mother to help us out on words that were problems. She had thirteen children and never had a doctor to attend any of them. She had a midwife.

FH: Were they all large [babies] like you?

GS: No, I was the largest [baby] from what I heard. I have a brother who is as large as I am, but I don’t think he was quite as heavy to begin with. She raised a

wonderful family. She always insisted on our being considerate and mannerly and tried to teach us the best she knew how on all points of decency. She tried to get us to appreciate the church. She knew it did wonders for both her folks and father's folks. Both families came to Utah in the 1850s. Grandfather Steed arrived in August 1850 in Salt Lake [City] and Grandfather Wilcox came in 1852. This [would be my] mother's father. He was going to go on to California [and] had not figured to stop in Utah. He came with [a] group coming west. He was their hunter [as] he was an unusually good marksman with the rifle. They said that he killed many buffalo on the way out. He would be enough ahead [of the group] and have [the buffalo] to the side of the road cut up and ready for the wagons when they came by. He could hand each of them their meat without them stopping.

FH: What was his name?

GS: [His name was] James David Wilcox. They tell a story: he had a brother, Darvell [Wilcox], who was a doctor in the Civil War. He came west after 1869 after the railroad [was in] to see grandfather. On the way out, every time the train stopped, I take it that early trains stopped quite often, he would get out with a new rifle he bought, the latest thing, and shoot at anything that was a good mark, like a clod or rock. He wanted to beat his brother, James, when he got to Utah. He wanted to show him that he could shoot better or as good as he could. When he got to Utah, he had this gun and a friend with him. He wanted grandfather go with him to Uncle Jonathan Wilcox's, that was another brother, who lived on the lake-line above Farmington. There was a little creek that came out there and he had a few acres of ground [with] a nice orchard.

On the way, they got the gun [out] to play [with] and showed [it to] grandfather. Grandfather looked at it [and] said it looked like a wonderful gun alright. Uncle Darvell took a few shots to show him how good he was and told grandfather to try his marksmanship. Even though it was the first time he shot the gun, he shot rings around Uncle Darvell. [Laughter] [Uncle Darvell] was so disgusted, he said, "Here, James, that is your gun. I don't want anything more to do with it." So he gave the gun to grandfather. [Laughter]

FH: Can you tell the names of the thirteen [children] in your family?

GS: Yes, five boys and eight girls. The eldest was [Anna] Laura [Steed]. Father bought the first piano [in] Farmington and had Laura take music lessons. She was a fine pianist and helped out with their in the wards both in Farmington, Syracuse and other places she lived and was generous in doing this.

The second one was Alice [Maria Steed] and she was good at instructing people. She had a chance to go to the LDS [Latter-day Saints] school in Salt Lake [City] and was a splendid teacher. [She] did a quite a lot of teaching, not school necessarily, but in church work. [She] spent quite a lot of time [doing] church work and raised a fine family. Laura raised a nice family, too.

The third one was [Julia] Louise [Steed]. She had a business education and had one child. [She married a] fine fellow who had a helicopter business [in] Phoenix, Arizona. [He] does a lot of work for the government now

Then Walter [William Steed] came; he was the first boy. Walter was sent on a [LDS] mission to Japan. It was at the time that the Alaskan Yukon Pacific Exposition was on at Seattle [Washington]. [He] had a chance to go there and then went on over to Japan. [He] was there only few months, less than a year. They had an elder who was sick and had gotten into some kind of trouble. Someone had to bring him home, and [because] Walter was the youngest man there, they could spare him without it affecting the mission as much as some of the others leaving. So Walter brought him home and went to California to finish his mission. He was secretary to the mission there. Father was instrumental in getting the bank in Clearfield started. When they asked him what he wanted out of the bank for what he had done, he said, "Just one thing I ask, that my son Walter —.

[The Clearfield State Bank began business in 1917. Capital stock, \$25,000.00 – surplus (not reported) – deposits (not reported). E. P. Ellison, president, W. W. Steed, Jr. cashier.

Utah since statehood, historical and biographical.]

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

GS: — be made the cashier." And that was agreeable. He was capable and has been with the bank ever since. He is, by far, the largest stock holder at the Clearfield [State] Bank.

Verna [Priscilla Steed] came next. She lived quite a normal life around [the] home and then married a boy and [moved] to Idaho. She spent a lot of her life around Heyburn, Idaho.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

GS: Marion [Joseph Steed] was the second boy and has been in Utah most of his life. He lives in Salt Lake [City] now. He has been in the real estate business, the dairy business [and] earlier did some farming. He has had quite an eventful life.

Then [Chloe] Ireta [Steed] was born. She married David Cook and they lived in Idaho for awhile after they were married. They [moved] back to Utah and she still lives in Utah. They have all been wonderful to work in the church and help in one way or another. Her husband did a tremendous [amount] of singing throughout the country [area] for funerals. He had a marvelous baritone voice. Even when he was the busiest, they would call on him for a funeral and he would [travel] miles to do what he could do to help. She has a very lovely family too.

My sister Bernice [Steed] is next. She was only married a short time and died, the result of an automobile accident. [She] left one child. She was married to a boy from Canada. My sister Elsie [Steed], just younger than I, had been up to Canada a month or so before my sister met with this accident. She knew [how to] care [for] the baby better than any one else, [so she] looked after him. A year or so [later], Bernice's husband asked her to be his wife so they [all] got along wonderfully. She raised Bernice's boy and had two children of her own. They live in Burbank, California now [and are] very fine people. I fit in between Bernice and Elsie.

[Then came] Thomas [Steed]. He only lived four years and [came down with] membranous croup which was very serious in those days. They didn't have the means to take care of them apparently and he passed away [on December 7, 1903].

Then came my sister Ruth [Steed]. She is married to Warren Hansen from East Garland [Box Elder County, Utah]. He has been a bishop and in the High Council. They have been in church work all their lives and [have] been tremendously industrious in the [growing] of sugar beets and [crops] of that sort.

My brother Rulon [James Steed] brought up the rear. He has been in the dairy business in Logan [Cache County, Utah] and has been on a [LDS] mission to the London Temple doing temple work. He has been doing temple work for a number of years. They are back in Logan now.

FH: Their dairy is well known in that area.

GS: [The] Steed Dairy?

FH: Yes.

GS: They don't sell milk any more, but they sell ice cream. He was telling about delivering milk one morning. [Laughter] When he came back to his truck there were a couple of college boys on their way to school. They saw this sign, Steed Dairy, and [one] said, "It is the first time I ever knew they milked horses in this country [area]." [Laughter] He got quite a kick out of it.

FH: That gives a little bit of a look at your family. Are there any outstanding or faith-promoting stories you would like to tell from the lives of your parents or relatives or yourself? Or was it [your] whole life?

GS: I think it was pretty much [our] whole life.

FH: [Did] your folks live close to the Lord and call on Him?

GS: Yes, they [lived] *The Word of Wisdom* strictly. We used to always entertain the brethren when they came up to conference. Mother always served them. One afternoon a brother got up and told what a wonderful meal he had, [that] her bread was out of this world. I remember mother was as red as a beet! It sure did embarrass her. [Laughter]

I would [like] to tell about father now. He brought the water from Clearfield to Syracuse and the area up there. He worked for the Davis and Weber Canal and helped to promote it. In fact, he was a director for a number of years. He was the first to get the water in that country [area] and first to put a well in too.

FH: He was the first to do a lot of things.

GS: Yes, the first bathtub, first piano in Farmington and he helped to build the bank in Farmington too. We had a horse at home, "Old Frank" we called him. He was pensioned until he died. The outstanding [event] in his life was that he pulled the brick up when they hoisted the brick and parts for the building where the bank was built. [Later] father brought him up and pensioned [retired] him, the old boy just had to eat and that was all.

FH: What did you do when you were growing up just for fun? Did you have fun?

GS: Oh yes, [I] had fun! [We] mostly [enjoyed] riding horseback and [a] little community recreation. I remember going to Lagoon [Farmington, Davis County, Utah] for Sunday school day. That was quite a day! Father would generally load us into the white-top [buggy] and we would go up [on] the old Bamberger [Line from Salt Lake City to Lagoon]. We called it the Dummy in those days, the Bamburger Dummy and ride to Lagoon. It cost us a quarter for fare.

FH: Was that an electric train?

GS: No, it was before they [had] the electricity. They eventually did make it electric. One day in Layton [Davis County, Utah the train] was a little late starting, you never could tell about the darn thing. A [youngster] went up to the engineer and said, "When is the dummy going?" He said, "Dummy? If there is any dummy around here it is you." I call that ridicule! [Laughter] This was when I was a [youngster] in the early teens. An old friend of mine from Farmington, Claude Earl, was looking at the horse on the merry-go-round. They had horses pull them in those days. They had two horses and they would use one for an hour or two and then take [him] out and put the other one in for an hour or two. I helped him on the merry-go-round and rode that thing for hours and hours. Now if I even look at one of those it makes me dizzy! [Laughter]

FH: Have you enjoyed reading in your life?

GS: Yes, I have enjoyed reading very much. I read a lot when I was younger. I not only read what I could around home, but when father would send me out to dig

postholes, I would take a book along and work like blazes for a while then slip off, read a few chapters and then come back and dig more postholes.

FH: Was this a tradition in your family to be interested in reading and self-education?

GS: Yes, I think it was, I really do. Walter is [very] well read and all my sisters, I think, are well read. Grandfather Steed was [very] well read.

FH: You told about meeting your wife in the mission field; [maybe] you better tell about your courtship and marriage.

GS: After we [came] back home, we started writing to each other. I think we passed a few letters in the mission field, but we saved the serious end of it until we [were] home. I had her come up and meet the folks. While she was there, she had another spell with her quinsy that she had had when she was a girl. She hadn't had it for several years. Then my sister [Bernice] was in an automobile accident. Mother was in the same car and suffered a broken pelvis, I believe it was, and so we were quite upset. We had my sister's funeral and she [became] closer to the family than she would have been as a casual visitor, but it was necessary that they wait on her to help her over the quinsy. She [was] close enough to help with the problems we had. We didn't see each other very much. We got together a time or two [and] she was up there that particular time. I remember her folks coming up to Salt Lake [City] for a family reunion. I went down to the reunion with them, but other than that it was pretty much letters. We decided that we [would be] married. I planned on trying to work things [out] to get as much money as I could to get married.

When we [were] married, we lived in Syracuse for awhile. Then we bought a piece of ground down in Utah County in Genoa under the Strawberry Highline Canal. We bought a two-room house and moved it down there. I hired a fellow by the name of Royal York to help me move it down and help me set it up on rocks. While at this place, we planted a [small] orchard and some berries. We built a [very] nice cellar, got ties to stick to the roof and walls and put a building on there for the animals and a granary.

We were there four years and then the bottom dropped out of farming. There was a banker in Eureka [Juab County, Utah and] we got the money through him, part of it. I paid \$2,000.00 down and we paid him \$6,000.00 for the property — \$100.00 an acre for sixty acres. He didn't like the idea of our not being able to pay the interest. I kept it up for two or three years and tried to pay on the principal, but I didn't get much [paid] on it. So I asked him if he couldn't be more lenient and give us more time. He said, "No." He would just as soon give it to someone else than to do that. We decided the thing to do was get out.

A fellow had offered us a chance to go down to Wayne County and take on a little grist mill there. We didn't know beans about any of it. He bragged about what it would do and yet he left the country [area]. I should have had better sense, [but] I

was just twenty-three [years old]. So we [stayed] down there until we got the [mill] in running order and hired a miller. We were down there two or three years, but they were asking way too much money for the mill. It wasn't [a] good milling country [area]. It was too high so [there] wouldn't be many years that the grain wouldn't get defrosted and wouldn't do for flour at all. We saw that we had made a mistake there.

We got [with] the King Brothers who were in on the mill and [had] us [come] down there. We owed a lot of money. He was trying to get us to help pay quite a bit of [the debt] off. I talked to them and told them it wouldn't do the way it was [set-up]. The thing to do was to have the mill overhauled and short the system. [It was] what they called a long system then. I had done some corresponding with the B F Gump Co. in Chicago [Illinois] about a system they had developed. [We] wouldn't need nearly the machinery and [would] turn out a pretty good product too. It was an enlargement on the [small] mill that they sold through the country [area]. They said that for \$2,500.00 they would help me get it fixed up. I would have to hire a millwright and do a lot of work on the spouting. They would send their engineer, Mr. Barryann, to start the mill out. I talked to the fellows [King Brothers] and told them if they would put up \$2,500.00 we could get the [project] going in a better set-up. They went to the bank and signed with me to get \$2,500.00 and I rode it two years that way.

I thought we were getting along fairly well. It had taken a little longer to pay out, but I had been paying the interest and the bank would have gone along if they would have renewed the note. Without saying a word to me, they had a receiver appointed. They hadn't kept their word about what they would [do] if I did pay [just] the interest. I had paid the interest [and] they said they wouldn't do anything, that they would give me another year to get squared around. So when they appointed this receiver, I called my customers I owed, who brought in wheat, and I paid [them] off and left. It fell apart alright. It was the wrong thing for them to do and they could see it afterwards.

In the meantime, the Bank of Eureka changed cashiers and the new man wrote my wife and me a letter. [The letter] said they would gladly take \$2,000.00 off the cost of the place and give [us] all the time [we needed] if we would come back, but we felt that we didn't want to go back and we didn't.

From Wayne County we [moved] to Nephi and I [found] a job in the mill in Nephi. [I] worked there until I was offered a job in Salt Lake [City]. We moved to Salt Lake [City] and were there two or three years. The radio plant I worked at ran out of business and they laid me off. One year I drove a dairy wagon [for] the old Maple Leaf Dairy. My brother, Marion, was the manager at the time. I would take the last streetcar in town at night. get my horses out, start out and get back home at 3:00 in the afternoon. It made a [very] long day. When it froze hard the horses had a hard time on the hills. I would start out on Second East [Street] and end up on Thirteenth East [Street]. We [would] have a deuce of a time on the

hills. Sometimes I would have to get out and push on the wagon and they would try to get [their] footing on the thin ice. I was glad to get out of that [job].

The [Great] Depression was on [and] jobs were plenty scarce. I had a chance to go to Clearfield and work in the cannery there. I helped them through the pea and cherry season. Then I was offered a job at the Hotel Utah [in Salt Lake City] on the west door [as] cab starter and doorman. I was there ten years. That was ten years of my life that I wasted, more or less. I would like to try to live it over again if I could. Because of the atmosphere and all, it wasn't to my liking at all, but we survived it.

We were in Salt Lake [City] some twenty-eight years. When [World] War [II] started I had a chance to go to the arms plant [Remington Arms in Salt Lake City]. [I] helped build one of the buildings, Building Three, and went to work on the shells, casings. [Inaudible] We had quite a time keeping the heading punch in order so it wouldn't ruin the cartridge.

I was there until the war was over. [I] had a chance to buy a piece of ground on North Temple [Street in Salt Lake City]. It had three old houses on it and we renovated and rented them out. I [found] a job with the church [at] Zions Securities, the tax-paying side of the church, at the steam plant on Motor Avenue [later called Social Hall Avenue]. We use to work the boilers to get the steam to the Belvedere [Apartments] and all the offices along Motor Avenue, between State Street and Second East [Street] and mostly on First South [Street]. The church owns a lot of that property there. I was there until [our] daughter Ruth's husband [Roger Osness] was sent to Las Vegas, Nevada as a salesman for Salt Lake Hardware. He knew of a hardware store for sale for \$50,000.00. He thought that if I went with him, he [and I] and the older daughter's [DeBeth] husband [Vernon Dickman] could buy the place. I would sell a portion of the [Salt Lake] property and get enough money to make the down payment and go from there. That is how we came to go to Las Vegas. I still have interest in the property west on North Temple [Street], but they are paying out on it. They put a motel there while we were on our mission. It was before we went, but that is what we survived on.

FH: You have three daughters; you should tell their names.

GS: DeBeth [Steed] is the eldest [child]. When she was born, I thought it would be nice to have her mother's name, but she said, "No." She wouldn't go for Big Della [or] Little Della. I thought why not take part of each name so I said, "What about DeBeth — the De from Della and Beth from Elizabeth." She went along with that. She is married to Vernon Dickman and they have four children, two boys and two girls. She had a serious accident when the first [child] was born and it is lucky [to be] alive. In fact, the doctors didn't think she would live. I think my wife has told about that. Anyway, she did and they adopted three children.

My second daughter [Ruth Steed] is married to Roger Osness who is a convert to the church from Bradford, Pennsylvania. He came to Utah and met Ruth. They seemed to be infatuated with each other almost from the start. He is now a bishop in a ward in [Las] Vegas. [They] have three girls and three boys and have done wonderfully well.

The youngest [daughter, Maurine Steed,] is married to Franklin Harris. Jr. He was teaching physics at the University of Utah [Salt Lake City, Utah] for a number of years. Now he is with [an] aerospace [company] in California. They have eleven children and lost one. They saw the picture, *Cheaper by the Dozen*, and used to talk about it.

FH: Tell about the [LDS] mission with your wife.

[END OF RECORDING THREE.]

GS: — Eighth Ward took most from the Second Ward. Our location was such that we went to the Eighth Ward. We were living [at] 2004 Cedar, between Nineteenth and Twenty-first [Streets]. They chose our son-in-law, Vernon Dickman, as the first bishop. They got after him and said, “Now the thing to do is get out a missionary as quick as possible. That will make your ward.” So he came to us and said, “Mother and dad, what about you going on a mission?” I said, “My goodness, my age?” I hadn’t thought of it [as] I wasn’t quite sixty. He said, “If you go now, you will get it over with.” We talked for awhile and he said, “If you think you can get along, fine and dandy.” So off we went to the mission field.

We were called [to] the Southern States [Mission]. When we [arrived in] Atlanta, Georgia, Brother Ricks was the mission president at that time. He was only there a month. He said, “I am going to send you to the most beautiful place in the whole mission: to West Palm Beach, Florida.” We didn’t know anything about places and were ready to go anywhere they told us. He sent us to West Palm Beach and we were there for twenty months. Right after getting there, Brother Ricks was replaced by Berkley Bunker who came from Las Vegas. We knew him [as] he was our High Council man.

FH: Was he also the president of the Las Vegas Stake?

GS: No, that was Brian.

FH: That was his brother. [He] is the one I have heard about.

GS: After twenty months, he transferred us to Kingsland, Georgia, four miles over the Florida line. In our area we were to work with Kingsland, Georgia, St. Marys, Georgia, and Woodbine, Georgia. On the Florida side, we had Vernon Myrtle Beach which was the most northern beach on the Florida east coast. We were there for four months. I thought we got along very well, people treated us wonderfully well and we have a lot of dear friends back there. They need married

couples so much to help leaven the atmosphere with the elders and the people themselves. In our case, we were told to work with the split families and inactive families. There is so much of that. There is at home as well as in the mission field so there is a real need.

We were there two years and then came back to Las Vegas when we were released. My boys had [been] fine at the store and showed that they didn't need me so I tried to find a place there that I could scratch a little earth [farm]. We had a nice little place, I liked it. I [grew] a few carrots and one thing or another. We had a few grapes and nut trees going, but the ground was terribly poor. It was heavy with [inaudible] down a ways was a strata of caliche that was hard to get through.

While we were in the mission field, the Dickmans bought a place just below us in Rockville [Washington County, Utah]. [They] wrote [to] us about it. When we got home, Vernon [invited] us to go up to the place and see it. He had an animal he wanted to kill for beef, so later on he and I came up and dressed [it] out. I walked around the town a little and liked the looks of it. The ground looked good for scratching [farming] so I asked my wife if she wanted to come up here. She thought it would be fairly nice too. I picked this place, because I like the south drainage. It drained to the [Virgin] River and was right on the highway. They had this piece and one kiddy corner across street. They tried to sell me that one when I asked about it, but I told them no, that this was the one I liked the best. My wife didn't object too much so they sold it to us. We built our home and have been here ever since.

FH: Have you been active in church work here?

GS: I was in the bishopric for ten years. My wife was president of Relief Society for close to five years. She is still in it [as] one of the counselors.

FH: Has life here been good?

GS: I think it has. I have quite enjoyed it. When I was released from the bishopric, they said I still had to have a job, so I said I would try and help out. They asked me to be group leader of the High Priests, so I have that responsibility. I am president of the senior class. They are trying to get someone else to take it, but no one else will so I have been there three or four years.

FH: I would like for you to consider what you would like to tell your children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren in the way of counsel and advice. After these years of experience, you should be able to counsel [them] well.

GS: I think [that] life is wonderful; there is no question about that. I think that it is well to keep in mind that these bodies were given us to be used, that we might be able to work and accomplish things.

I think that we need to remember that they were given to us and we are supposed to report back with them. For that reason, we need to take good care of them and abide by the counsel given us. I believe that there is a Supreme Being and that the Savior came in mortality and walked upon the earth.

I hope that none of my posterity ever gets the idea that there isn't a Supreme Being and that the Savior really doesn't exist or that He has passed away or anything of that sort. I think that is as far-fetched, silly and ridiculous as people can possibly get. I believe that the Prophet Joseph Smith was indeed a prophet. I think we are fortunate to have been born after his coming, after he came and established the gospel makes us privileged people beyond expression.

I certainly believe that the church is true, that David O. McKay is indeed a prophet. He has been a wonderful person all the way through and [still] is. I think there is a wonderful work to do here. I think you are always going to have problems. As I see it now, there are tremendous problems shaping up and there are going to be a lot of things to try people's faith. As Thomas Payne said, "Even in the days of revolution, this is the time that will try men's souls." It is certainly going to do it from here on out, but if they will trudge on and do their duty to God and conscience true, they will come out alright. I believe that.

Like Nephi said, The Lord won't ask us to do something but what we can do it and He will help us if we abide by the counsel given. So it is possible, but we must do our best, we must try and He will help us. Like the Prophet Joseph [Smith] said about going and asking the Lord which church is right — he said he worked it over in his own mind and tried in different ways to find a solution. When he couldn't go any further, he asked the help of the Lord and that is the proper procedure for us to follow.

So work hard and do not live for other people; what I mean by that, live to help them, yes, but live by your own conscience. Don't let someone else tell you how to do it. It is important that you live so that you can live with yourself without having regrets. It is a lot easier to get into trouble than to get out, I found that out. There is always trouble around [and] if you are not careful, you can get into it.

[END OF RECORDING FOUR. END OF INTERVIEW.]