

Interview with
VICTOR IVERSON

November 23, 1968

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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VICTOR IVERSON

Victor Iverson was interviewed on November 23, 1968 in Washington City, 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.

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

VI: [My name is] Victor Iverson.

FH: What is your birth date?

VI: [I was born] March 7, 1897.

FH: [Where were you] born?

VI: [I was born in Washington City] Utah.

FH: What was your father's name?

VI: [His name was] Edward Miller Iverson.

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

VI: [Her name was] Eveline [Adelia] (Boggs) [Iverson].

FH: Can you tell some things you remember from your early childhood?

VI: The first six years of my life were spent in a small adobe home in the lower part of Washington [City]. [The house was] across the street from where Edward Nisson now lives. Two of my brothers [Lafell and Lester] were born there. When I was about six years old, we moved from there into the home where I spent the rest of my single life. My folks had a small store [Iverson Mercantile] in conjunction with the home. They operated [that store] for many years.

As a young fellow, we had lots of freedom to move [around] and do the things we liked to do. I spent two or three years of my early life, while I was still going to the elementary school, living with my grandfather, Hyrum [Smith] Boggs. Two of my mother's sisters [Orpha and Matilda Boggs] helped me with my schoolwork and I helped with the chores around their place. [I] enjoyed riding horses and doing many of the things that boys and girls liked to do at that time. We had many favorite swimming holes; we even swam in the [old Washington] Canal and the [Virgin] River. We spent a lot of time [with] flippers hunting for birds and lizards. We liked to trap quail because there were a lot of them in the country [area] at

that time. They came in great flocks in the fall of the year. I can remember well how we used to like to hang around where they were making molasses and [we] chewed [sugar] cane after school and on Saturdays. [As] we grew up, we learned early to do many of the chores around the home — [like] taking care of the horses, cows, pigs, chickens, cutting wood, getting in the kindling and doing all sorts of [chores] that boys and girls in those days had to do.

When I was about seven years old, I started school. My folks kept me out until the brother next to me was old enough to go to school, too. We were almost twins, only fifteen-months apart. From then on, almost through our whole school life, we went to school together. We have always enjoyed each other's association and company very much.

FH: What was his name?

VI: His name was Lafell Iverson.

FH: Was he a close buddy to you?

VI: Yes, very close.

FH: Tell about the [educational] facilities.

VI: When I first went to school, [classes] for the lower grades were in the basement of the church house. I remember one of my first teachers there was Edna Cragun. She was very strict and demanding. I also had Andrew Sproul and another teacher by the name of Eddie Mickelson. I remember so well [the] birds and animals that Mickelson stuffed and used to bring to school. [This was] very fascinating to us at that time. As we advanced in our grades, we were sent to school in the upper room of the church house; it was divided by a curtain drawn through the center. I remember one of the teachers was the principal at the time, Charles Stoney. [He] came here from Beaver [Beaver County, Utah]. [He] was a small man, but very rigid and strict and stern. He didn't hesitate to use a good long mulberry willow or threaten to take an axe handle to you if you didn't step [toe] the line.

FH: [Did] he fall right into line with his name?

VI: Yes, he was very much that way. Before I was through the eighth grade, the present schoolhouse was built. That was about 1909. I spent the last two or three years of my elementary [education] there. The teacher that I remember best in that school was Willard O. Nisson. He later became a very prominent [and] fine citizen in our town. Many of the boys and girls who grew up here at this time owe a great deal to his help and guidance. Other teachers that I remember in that particular school [were] a man named Hickman came from Beaver and Angus Sproul.

I graduated from the eighth grade and went on to school at the Branch

Agricultural College or the Branch Normal School in Cedar City [Iron County, Utah]. I don't know whether I ought to retract here now or not.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VI: Some the of the things as a boy I remember best were the days that I spent with my grandfather, Hyrum Boggs, and his two sons, "Rube" [Reuben] and Rupert [M. Boggs]. I lived at their home, as I stated before, quite a lot. I made a number of trips peddling and freighting with him [my grandfather] by team and wagon into various areas in this part of the country. I remember going with my Uncle Rupert to Milford [Beaver County, Utah] after a load of freight for the store. This trip took us about eight days. At night we would camp wherever night overtook us. Ordinarily, we hauled a barrel of water on the side of the wagon and a bale or two of hay. Sometimes weather was very disagreeable, but these trips had to be made to accommodate the store and [to] keep freight or goods in them so that business could be carried on.

I also remember one particular peddling trip I went with my other Uncle "Rube" Boggs. In a wagon, we went up through Toquerville, Virgin City, Springdale, and Rockville. [These communities are all in Washington County, Utah.] We gathered up chickens and bought eggs by the dozen. Then we came back to Washington [City, Washington County, Utah] and loaded up some green onions and other [items] and went on a trip to peddle [the] produce and chickens [and eggs] at the mining camps [in] Pioche and Caliente [Nevada]. A trip like this would ordinarily take eight or nine days. Again, we camped wherever night overtook us. Ordinarily, there were places along the road that teamsters tried to reach so that they could get hay or possibly buy a loaf of bread or a half gallon of milk for the camp.

I remember the first experience I ever had at Terry's Ranch [near Enterprise, Washington County, Utah] when we camped there one night. My uncle went in and bought a half a gallon of nice, fresh milk for our supper. In this way, I grew up to enjoy my grandfather and my uncle very much.

Wherever grandpa [Boggs] went he liked to take one of his grandsons with him and we always enjoyed going with him. He was a good teamster; he kept a good outfit and good teams. He took a lot of pride and joy in his outfits. He was a great trader, too. I remember one morning when he left Washington [City] with a nice team of black horses. That evening when he came back, he had a team of sorrel mares. Horse trading in those days was quite common! It wasn't anything then for one man to drive up alongside of another one in a wagon and say, "How would you like to trade that horse you got there for this mare I have?" "Well, maybe that would be alright. How much boot [extra] will you give me?" "Oh, I don't think I owe you any boot; possibly I ought to get the boot." Many horse trades were made that way.

Talking about horse trades: there was a certain man in this town [who] was about

to move out. He came to my father and offered him two of the finest lots in Washington [City] for a gray mare that we had. Those same two lots today would be worth about \$10,000. It is interesting to think about how times have changed — the value of property today and the value of a good horse at that time. In those days, men's lives in this part of the country [area] primarily depended on a good team, a wagon, and what he could do with them. All the freight going out, ore from the Apex Mine [on the Shivwits Indian Reservation], ore from the Grand Gulch [Mine on the Arizona Strip], ore from the Savanic [Mine on the Arizona Strip] and the Silver Reef [Mines in Washington County, Utah], had to be transported out by teams and wagons to Milford which was 110 miles away. Later, [the ore was transported] to Modena [Nevada] which [was] a little closer, about eighty miles. We all grew up learning to handle horses. Very early in my life, I made several trips to Lund [Nevada by] myself after freight. [I] managed the team, loading and unloading the freight, and doing [everything] that any freighter had to do, whether it was winter or summer. It was common in those days for boys to know that they were to grow up to help support the family. Young fellows at that time never thought much of themselves and what they were going to accumulate until they had actually married and started out on their own.

FH: You have [had] some experiences that I think [you] should tell [about]. [Did] you interrupt your education and take some special training away from home?

VI: Yes.

FH: Would you like to tell about that?

VI: After I graduated from the eighth grade in Washington [City], some other boys from our town were going to school at the Branch Normal College in Cedar City. Because of the influence of these fellows, my father thought that I should also go to this school, although we had Dixie Normal College in St. George. My father was criticized very severely because he sent me up there [when] our own school [was] closer. I graduated from the Branch Normal — the Branch Agricultural College, which it later became — in 1916. The next year, I went to an auto mechanics school in Kansas City [Missouri] and spent fourteen weeks getting some training in auto mechanics. I came home and spent some time working in garages on automobiles. I seemed to lean toward [wanting more] education. After I had spent a period of time in the [United States] Army, I decided to take up teaching.

FH: Tell about your experience in the army.

VI: I think maybe I should say a little bit about the time that I spent in the army. One of my buddies, Bert Hall, and I decided to volunteer inasmuch as we felt we might be drafted into [World War I] anyway. We enlisted in May 1918 [and] were sworn in at Fort Douglas in Salt Lake City [Salt Lake County, Utah]. We were sent to Camp Holabird, just out of Baltimore [Maryland] a few miles. We were

members of the 311th Transport Unit, which [was involved] with transportation of soldiers, supplies, and things of that nature from camp to the battlefield and [to] various zones of the war area. I never was sent overseas; I spent most of my time there. Almost all of the time that I [spent] in the army was spent in Baltimore. I have seen many men come into our camp where units were made up and saw these boys stay there a few days. Early some mornings, we would see them lined up [to be] sent overseas. We never knew when our turn was going to come, but something, possibly in our favor, happened that we never were sent over. I remember very well the Armistice Day [of November 11, 1918] and what a great celebration took place. The army men and [other] servicemen in that area just practically took over Baltimore that evening. There were a lot of [military camps] in and around Baltimore; some of the largest camps in the nation were there. We were all glad to get home. I spent more time in the army after the Armistice was signed than during the actual warfare.

On April 1, 1919 I was discharged at Fort. D. A. Russell in Cheyenne, Wyoming. I came home and spent some time here helping my father on the farm. That summer I went to Idaho and worked. I came back that winter and spent some time working in a dry goods wholesale establishment in Salt Lake City. About that time, I decided I had spent enough time just fooling around, so to speak. It was then that I decided I should make up my mind to do what I [was] going to do and go on to school. From there on, I centered my attention on a teaching career.

FH: Before we go on with this part of your life, tell a little bit about your parents. First, your father, then your mother, and your grandparents if you like.

VI: My father was born in [Duting] Denmark and came to this part of Utah to help raise cotton as many others did. [Edward Miller Iverson was nine years old when he came from Denmark.]

FH: Was he sent here?

VI: Yes, he was sent here. He brought part of his family directly from Denmark to here. Others of his family remained in Denmark and never did come over. My father liked to do agricultural work. He grew up to be a very fine farmer and a good gardener. He was neat [and] knew how to take care and handle the soil. He was very successful at things like that. Many of the successes I have had as I grew older in gardening and farming, I attribute to things that he did. I watched him [as] he showed us how to do [things]. He was very kind and soft-spoken. I never remember him being angry enough at any of his boys and girls that he would pick up anything to hit them. I never remember him actually using any manual force on any of my brothers and sisters.

My mother was a daughter of Hyrum Boggs. She was a little more quick-spoken, but very kind and gentle, too, with her family. I have the greatest love and respect; I remember them so well, particularly for that. We had a large family and we

enjoyed each other's association very much. It just seems today, as we talk about all the troubles there are in the world, how fortunate we were in that time to grow up [because] we were not disturbed by all those problems. It seems like our mother and father never did show that they were worried particularly about where we were and what we were doing. We had a lot of freedom and leeway to go and come, and to do the little things that we enjoyed doing without a lot of interference from them. We were never, as I remember, told that we had to do anything. We were made to feel, in the training that they gave us, that we were to assume our part in the responsibility of taking care of all the things around the home. The chores had to [be] done, gardening and farm work had to be done. We just each grew into that as we came along.

My father and mother, for a number of years, managed a store called Iverson Mercantile. They did a very good business in a small town [and] made a lot of friends that way. [It was] a general merchandise store and handled practically everything that could be transported here at that time with wagons and teams. [There was] coal oil for the lamps and any little notion you could think of in the way of patent medicines. All sorts of notions, groceries, dry goods, ribbons, shoes, cloth, almost anything you could mention that could be [purchased] at that time, we tried to handle in the store.

My father did quite a bit of hiring of different men to do various kinds of work. Most of this he paid off with what they called store pay. He used scrip or he had his own money with his name printed on it. It was very common in those days when somebody worked for him or we bought [items from] somebody. He would pay them off with Miller Iverson [General] Merchandise scrip. They could come back and use the scrip to buy from the store any [items] that they needed. We all took our turns waiting on [customers in] the store. We learned how to measure cloth and ribbon, to fit people with shoes and measure up various [items] that we had. [Every item, like] sugar, had to be weighed. We had a cutter that could cut a pound of cheese [and] an old tobacco cutter that could cut a plug of tobacco. Many interesting [items] that we used in the store in those days would be collector's items today, [but they] went down an old well that we filled up. We have often regretted that we didn't lay them away, because we can see now how important they would be.

FH: Tell about your grandfather Boggs.

VI: My grandfather, Hyrum Boggs, was the third boy born in the state of Utah. His father, Francis Boggs, came to Utah in the first company with Brigham Young. His name is inscribed on Brigham Young's monument at the head of Main Street [in Salt Lake City]. He was a carpenter. Soon after Washington [City] was settled in 1857, Francis Boggs was sent [there] to help work on the old Cotton Factory down here. My grandfather, Hyrum Boggs, grew up here in Washington [City] as a very young man. [Hyrum Boggs came to Washington City at age twelve.] He learned to do all the things that had to be done here. He and his wife, Ada

[(Augusta)] Wilkins, both worked in the factory. They learned to run some of the machines, carding, weaving, spinning and various jobs in the factory. I remember my mother telling about how she used to go to the factory and carry the lunch for her mother.

FH: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

VI: I had six brothers and four sisters. There were eleven of us in the family.

FH: Tell a little bit about them.

VI: All of our family lived to adulthood. I was the oldest one in the family and the brother next to me was named Lafell [Iverson]. He lives in LaVerkin [Washington County, Utah] now. He also became a teacher and taught [school for] thirty-nine years. He married Cleone Adams, who was a girl raised in this town. He has always been very active.

My next brother is Lester Iverson and he lives in Washington [City]. He has an orchard and a summer home in New Harmony [Washington County, Utah]. He spends his time [going] back and forth [between the two places].

The next brother is Fay Iverson. He went on a [LDS] mission for The Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] when he was a young fellow. [He] married a girl from Florida. At the present time, he manages the alcoholic rehabilitation center in Cedar City and has done a very fine [and] outstanding job.

Two of my brothers, Martin [Hyrum] and Rex [Iverson] died when they were about forty-four years old. Each of them died of a heart attack. Two of my sisters have also died, Gladys and Grace [Iverson]. Gladys was married and had a young family at the time she died. Grace was only twenty-one years of age when she died at Pioche, Nevada. She was staying there with my sister Gladys at the time.

I have a brother, [Edward] Keith [Iverson], who is the youngest brother in the family. He was born while I was in the army. I was twenty-one years old when he was born. Keith [lives] in LaCrosse, Wisconsin now. He is a city inspector [for] buildings there. He has a wife and three children. Apparently they are doing very well there.

One of my sisters, [Addie] Mae [Iverson], is living in Salt Lake City [now]. She married James Ott. I also have a sister Berneice [Iverson] who married Reed Williams from Kanarraville [Iron County, Utah]. They are, at the present time, living in Winnemucca, Nevada, where he is [working in] heavy construction. Now, have I missed any of them? I don't want to do that.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VI: My mother raised or took care of Rulon [Atkin, known as Rulon "Rudy" Iverson],

Gladys's oldest son. He grew up with the rest of us in the family, so [my parents] had a family of twelve actually. Often, when we sat around that long table of ours in the dining room —

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

VI: — there could be as many as fourteen of us at the table at one time.

FH: That took a lot of doing, didn't it?

VI: That took a lot of doing. I might say too, that my mother usually had a hired girl to help with the housework. Many of those girls, I remember very well and I grew to love them very much. They meant so much to us in our early childhood and our early training. They all became almost [like] a second mother to us.

FH: [Like] part of the family.

VI: Yes, part of the family. Most of them lived in the home and helped with all the [chores] that had to be done around the home.

FH: Would you like to mention their names?

VI: [There are] two or three of these girls [that] I remember so well. Some of them are gone now. [One] was Martha Tanner. Her youngest son, Clare Tanner, later married my only daughter, Maxine [Iverson]. They live in Las Vegas [Nevada]. I remember two or three others [who] lived with us: Ida Crawford, Minnie Larson, [and] Viola Tobler. These girls were all very good and helpful in our home.

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

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VI: It seems the primary object in young people's lives today is to have fun. To have fun seems to be quite a problem for them. They don't know hardly what to do to have fun. [There are] so many things to entertain them — picture shows, television, automobiles, and all there are places to go, [yet] they still seem discontented and unhappy about, "what can I do next?" When I was growing up, it didn't seem to be any problem. Most of the [activities] we did for fun, we had to do for ourselves. We had to think of parties that we could organize [and] dances that we could go to. We thought of having a candy pull in some friend's home, or a chicken supper in some person's place, [and] each of us helped to furnish [the food]. We thought of going horseback riding, especially on Sunday afternoons to visit somebody's orchard or watermelon patch. We loved to swim and we knew of several holes and ponds that we could easily go to. We spent a lot of time in those days hunting. There were a lot of animals: rabbits, raccoons, quail [and] ducks. Many of the [activities] that people spend so much time searching for, we found

very easily.

I remember one of the favorite sports we liked when I was a young fellow, was to get on a horse, go out into the hills and chase wild horses, mustangs we called them. In those days, there were a lot of wild burros running over the hills. We spent time going out for the fun of it, chasing them to see if we could catch them. We liked to go out with some of the older men, too, and watch them [to] learn some of the tricks when it came to roping. For instance, going out onto the range and catching calves, making a fire and learning how to throw them and brand them. This was all part of growing up and [our] life in those days.

FH: Have you enjoyed music? Has music meant much to you?

VI: I have always enjoyed music, but I never was what you would call a musician. I never did learn to play an instrument. I always had sort of a desire to learn to play the violin, but I never did follow it up. My folks never encouraged it, and so I never did take to any particular instrument. I might say it is the love for music and the people [who] play it that brought me to marry Erma [Reber], my wife. She was coming here from Santa Clara [Washington County, Utah] as a very young girl to give music lessons to boys and girls in this town. She came to our place to give my oldest sister, Gladys, organ lessons. [There were] very few pianos in town at that time, although there were a number of organs. Erma came to our home and [that] was where I first met her. She would usually ride over from Santa Clara on a horse and spend the night with her uncle and aunt, Frank [and] Polly Staheli. She came once a week to follow up on [the] lessons.

It was while she was coming here that she and I met and started going together. We went together off and on for a number of years. I remember how I used to ride a horse from Washington [City] to Santa Clara [on] Sunday afternoons to spend the evening with her. Often [it was] into the evening and then I would have to ride home ten miles back on a horse. I never thought anything of it because that was just part of the times. I had a good horse and it took me about an hour to ride from Washington [City] to Santa Clara. I put up my horse and later on in the evening saddled up and came home.

FH: This [encounter] led up to what happened later. Did you go on with [your education]?

VI: I did. We went together for a number of years. It could have been from 1916. We went together [for] periods [of time]. She went with other boys and I went with other girls. After I came home from the army I decided that I would go back to take some [more education] and become a teacher. Up to this time, she and I had been going together. Just prior to the time that I started teaching, we were married. The first year that I taught was in Leeds [Washington County] Utah. [We] were married on September 5, 1922. Later that fall, school started and we went to Leeds to live. That was where we spent our first winter. After I had spent

one year teaching in Leeds, we came back and remodeled a little old home and that [is] where I am living now. During the winter of 1923 - 1924, I got some further training.

FH: Where did you go to school?

VI: I went to school that year at Dixie [Junior] College. I got my first grade teaching certificate. In the fall of 1924 I started teaching school in Washington [City].

FH: Did you get any more [education] later on?

VI: All the [education] I [received] after that was [attending] summer school or [doing] extension work. I spent a number of summers away [at] school. Three summers, I spent in Logan [Cache County, Utah] at the USU [Utah State University] taking some college work. Two summers I spent at the University of Utah [Salt Lake City, Salt Lake County, Utah]. Besides this work, I did a great amount of extension work that was given through either one of these colleges in connection with Dixie [Junior] College in St. George. That way, I [received] all my [education]. I never did get a degree, but I had the equivalent of a degree, [if] I had filed and made [an] application for it.

FH: You were living in Washington [City] then. Where [was] your first child [born]?

VI: Our first [child], Austin [Iverson], was born January 14, 1924 in Santa Clara. Erma went over to be with her mother at that time. [Then], very few women went to hospitals for the birth of their child. [They] usually [had] midwives. Most any little town had a midwife to take care, along with a doctor, of the birth of a child. Austin was born in the home of Erma's parents, Ernest and Rosina [(Staheli) Reber, in Santa Clara. We stayed there awhile after the baby was born and then we moved back to Washington [City]. At that time, I was going to school [and] had not yet received my first grade certificate.

FH: How did you manage to make enough money to get along and still attend school, marriage [and] a child being born and all? You must have had something going [for you]!

VI: I had [completed] one year of teaching and my parents helped me. Her parents were very good to us and helped us too, with [food] to eat. We did what work we could during the summer to make what little [money] we could. Living expenses in those days weren't nearly as high as they are now. As far as groceries [were] concerned, we could get along with a very small amount because we had our own cow, our own chickens [and] we raised our own pigs. Many of the [foods] we needed, we would grow in our own garden. We would put up [can/bottle] many of the vegetables like beans and corn out of our garden. It didn't require a great amount of cash as far as groceries were concerned. We did have to have money to buy clothing and some of the other [items] that we needed. In those days, young

couples got along. We lived in a two-room house to begin with. We had a stove that burned wood and coal. We didn't have all the conveniences that young people in this day and age expect: refrigerators, electric washers and all that go along with modern life. We got along very economically as far as that was concerned.

FH: What happened to your first child?

VI: Austin was born in Santa Clara. A lady there, Sister Graff [Henry Graff's wife], was the midwife. Each morning she would come to help take care of him. Women in those days were not rushed out of their bed as they are today in a hospital. I am not saying it would not have been better, but women in those days usually spent about ten days in bed. The babies were taken care of by the wife's mother and a midwife. I can remember so well how babies in those days were dressed in long robes that doubled up over the feet with a tight band around their navel and how they had to be waited on very much. It was much different than what we see now-a-days.

Austin was quite a cross baby, possibly because we didn't know how to take care of him. We didn't have those good foods that babies are growing up on in this day. People [at] that time were quite ignorant as to how to take care of a baby. We used to blame the babies for being so cross; I think it was quite reasonable to believe it was the care they [received], the food they had to eat, rather than anything that caused them to be disagreeable, uncomfortable, and caused so many wakeful hours [for their] parents. Austin grew up to be a very active baby, was very sweet and cute. We have some very charming pictures of him when he was very [young]. We enjoyed him very much. He was about four years old when our daughter, Maxine, was born.

FH: What happened with Austin through his life?

VI: Austin went on to school and was partway through college when World War II broke out. He spent some time — I would like to go back and say before I get too far on in his story, that Austin and I enjoyed each other very much. He spent a lot of time with me in the garden. He was very ambitious and anxious to help. He was never any problem to get help from; it seemed like it came natural to him to want to help. He assumed his part of the responsibilities around the home, taking part in doing the chores, bringing in the kindling, helping cut the wood. He used to go with me often to find wood we hauled off the mountain. We even went as far as across the desert to Modena with a little truck and trailer to haul wood. He remembers these [events] very well [and] they stand out very much in his life. He often talks about them. I used to go with him hunting, fishing, and doing many of the things that boys and fathers like to do. These things stand out very much, too, in his life.

He went on to school, was a good student, [and was] partway through college

when World War II came on. He went to Oakland, California, and worked in the shipyards as a welder and became a journeyman welder. He was later drafted into the [United States] Navy [and] became attached to the submarine corps in the Navy. He spent all of his [military] service time [in] Honolulu on the Hawaiian Islands. During this time, as all parents do, they worried about their boys, but I would always remember how thoughtful he was during the time he was there. He sent home to us many nice things from the Hawaiian Islands. He was always thinking of us in that sense. He wrote us nice letters and was very kind and congenial that way. He was married during this time, too, because he had married before he was sent overseas. His wife, Lorna, lived with us all during the time that he was in [military] service. We enjoyed her too, because she was very nice.

FH: What was her maiden name?

VI: Her name was Lorna Hall. She was a daughter of Bert Hall who went in the army with me.

FH: Did they have some children?

VI: Austin and Lorna have two daughters, Shanna and Vicki. Shanna was born while they were living here with us after he had come home from the service. Later, they bought their own home [and] they still live here in town. Shanna's married now. She is nineteen years old and has a son of her own — our first and only great-grandchild. Their other daughter, Vicki, is still living with them [and] is going to high school in St. George. Austin became a very skilled sheet metal-air conditioning craftsman. I think he is one of the very best in this area. He is well-known and well-liked in his trade. He has done work all up and down the state of Utah on some very important buildings. He just [finished] doing a job up at Lehman's Cave [Nevada]. He has worked on churches and schools, all sorts of buildings, libraries, hospitals and clinics. He knows his business very well, takes a great deal of pride in his work and [receives] a great amount of joy and respect [from] people in his business.

FH: Tell about [your] second child. Was it [a] little girl?

VI: Maxine [Iverson] was our second child. She was born in our own home about four years after Austin. Dr. [Donald Alpine] McGregor delivered her as he did Austin. We had Minnie Paxman for a midwife. She came here each day, quite early in the morning to look after Erma and our baby girl. Maxine, as a baby, was a beautiful little child. She had such a fine, loving and kind disposition. If she was spoiled, it was because we spoiled her. She grew up here. She and her mama enjoyed their association a great deal. I used to love to carry Maxine around to show her off. She was very apt [and] good in school. She had a [very] bad sick spell when she was in first grade that [slowed] her some. [It] put some of her other girl friends ahead of her, but she went on to catch up with them and to go on with them through high school. Maxine married when she was eighteen years of age and

went to California to live. She lived there for about four years and then divorced and came back here. Later, she married Clare [Averett] Tanner, the son of one of our neighbors and very old and close friends. At this time, they are living in Las Vegas. They have three very fine children, a boy and two girls. He was also a skilled sheet metal and air conditioning man and has done a lot of very fine work down there. Maxine and Clare have a hobby [of] collecting old bottles. [They] collect, trade and sell old bottles. They have been very successful at this and have made themselves quite well-known throughout the west because of this particular hobby.

Mervin [Iverson], our third child, was born in the St. George [Dixie Pioneer Memorial] Hospital on September 9, 1937. He was born ten years [after] Maxine. He came along when our other two children were [older]. They weren't expecting a brother, I suppose, or a sister either. We were very happy and fortunate to [have] another child. Mervin grew up in quite a different age than our older boy did. Austin spent most of his young childhood during [The] Depression days when a dime, or a nickel, was hard to get a hold of. The boys and girls in that time were actually and earnestly looking for something to do [where] they might earn a nickel, a dime, or a half dollar, so they could have something to spend [on] themselves. I have often heard Austin and Mervin talking. Austin says, "You don't know what it was [like] to live during The Depression. You never did know [a] time that mom or dad couldn't give you a quarter to go to a show or to spend for the Fourth of July or the Twenty Fourth of July. Getting a nickel or dime out of them during The Depression days was like pulling teeth, because there just weren't [many] around."

Mervin was a good, bright boy [and] went on to do very well in school, but he became quite unhappy and discontented as boys and girls often do. He wanted to quit and become a truck driver. He lost interest in school for awhile and we became quite unhappy about that. He and I didn't enjoy the association that Austin and I did, as far as fishing and doing many of the things that Austin and I had learned to do. By the time Mervin came along, we had an electric stove in the house and there was no longer any need to haul wood. We had other conveniences that made living more comfortable. Times had changed; dollars were much easier to get a hold of. Mervin wasn't the fisherman and sportsman that Austin was and so the need to go hunting and fishing was not as common. Mervin has often mentioned this to me. He said, "You never spent the time with me that you used to with Austin." I said, "I guess I didn't Mervin, but I am not too happy about it either." He feels that possibly Austin's association with me was just a little closer. I will say that Mervin and I have spent a lot of time together later on in life.

I went away one summer with him and went to summer school, not because I needed to, but because I wanted to spend some time with him. [We] went to Logan [to Utah State University] together one summer and took classes together. [We] really enjoyed each other's association. I wasn't a bit jealous of him when he drew better marks than I did in [the] two classes that we took together.

Mervin married when he was nineteen years old, and decided then that he had had all the truck driving he wanted, and he would like to go on to school. He said to me one day, "Dad, I would sure like to go on to school and become a teacher." I said, "Are you really sure of that?" He said, "Yes." I said, "I will be [very] happy to help you." So we got him back in school. I went with him to CSU [College of Southern Utah] in Cedar City. We found some employment there for him. He started out to become a teacher. After he spent one winter and two summers there, he went on to Logan [to Utah State University] and [received] his bachelors degree and teaching certificate. He [went] to Parowan [Iron County, Utah] and taught one winter. Then he easily [found] a job in St. George as a teacher. He taught two years at West Elementary School in St. George.

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VI: Mervin was an outstanding teacher and soon gained a lot of recognition for his ability. He had the initiative to do a lot of things; his [class] room was always outstanding because of his art [and] beautiful charts and things that he did visually.

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

VI: He had the ambition to go on to earn more money and improve in the field of education. He moved to Las Vegas and taught one winter and [then] he investigated [a] school at Flagstaff, Arizona. It was while at Flagstaff that he and his wife [had] some trouble [and they] divorced. They had one child, Kerry [Iverson], and he has custody of [him]. Kerry is living with Mervin and his second wife, Sherry Isbell, from Richfield [Sevier County, Utah]. She was also a teacher. They have a little boy of their own.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VI: Mervin was dedicated as a teacher and became an assistant principal to Fenton Tobler. The next year applications were sent out for prospective principals. Mervin was successful in fulfilling the responsibilities [and] all that goes into being a good principal. He became a principal in a new school, the C. C. Ronnow [Elementary] School in North Las Vegas [Nevada]. [At] Flagstaff, Arizona [he] received his masters degree. At the present time, while still being [the] principal, he is working on his doctorate degree in administration. He hopes, in the near future, to be able to get his Ph.D. in Education at USU [Utah State University].

FH: Your children have all achieved very well. Let's go back to your own life and tell [what] has happened [to you]. [What were] your educational achievements? [What has happened] from the time your first child was born?

VI: Teaching was my primary occupation all [of] my life. I taught school for forty

years. I began my teaching career in Leeds. I spent a year out [of teaching to] go to school, then I went back to teaching again. Altogether, I put in forty years. Thirty-nine of those years I taught here in Washington [City]. For a number of years I was a teacher in the school; later, I became a teacher-principal. I spent all the time as a teacher of the fifth and sixth grades, two grades that I enjoyed very much. If I was going to become a teacher again and would have a choice of grades that I would like to teach it would be fifth grade. Boys and girls in that grade are very pliable, eager and active. They are still quite obedient; they have not grown to an age in their life when they are changing over and taking on some of the characteristics that create some of the resentments that boys and girls grow into as they become a little older. My teaching experience has been a very happy one. I couldn't think of anything that I could have enjoyed more if I were to live my life over again. I would surely like to be a teacher again.

I have had many hundreds of boys and girls go through my [classes]. I have been directly responsible for that part of their education. Many, many of these boys and girls have come back to visit me and they still come back. I have taught many entire families. For instance, I taught Woodrow Staheli in the sixth grade and taught all of his boys and girls with the exception of Nancy [Staheli]. Had I taught one more year, I would have taught Nancy. That has been the case [with] many other families in town. For instance, I taught Chris Connell and Matilda Turnbeaugh both and, later on, I taught all of their boys and girls, but their youngest boy. This has been true in a number of cases, where I taught the parents and then all of their children. During my teaching experience, I taught my four youngest brothers and sisters, [Edward] Keith, Rulon, Mae and Berneice [Iverson]. Also I taught my own three children, Austin, Maxine and Mervin in the fifth and sixth grades.

FH: Did your children respond to you as a teacher as well as being their father?

VI: Although my boys and girls never had much to say about it at the time, [they] have indicated sometimes that possibly I took advantage of them, or made an example of them, when it came to disciplining [the] other children. At the time, I didn't feel that I was imposing upon them, but as I have grown older and look back on it, maybe I did. I am sure that I didn't do anything intentionally to hurt them. As a matter of fact, it was only to help them to help others. I am sure that none of them has been injured because of it.

I had the pleasure of teaching with a great number of people during my [years]. I really enjoyed all those people that I taught with. I retired in the spring of 1962 from teaching. This is something I looked forward to, although I enjoyed teaching. As we grow older, some of the things we were able to do when we were younger grow on us, so that we become more nervous in trying to do [those tasks]. The people of my town were very thoughtful and kind to me [at my] retirement. They gave me a testimonial and [a] great majority of the people turned out. Many of the teachers that I taught with came [from] a good number of miles

to be there. My own family was there; my daughter was called upon to respond. The tribute she gave to me there that night, I shall always remember. They presented me with nice oil painting easels and all the [supplies for] painting. I have quite a desire, always have had, to do some painting. As a matter of fact, I have done some. This is one thing I liked to do very well when I was teaching. I always kept my room well-decorated with beautiful pictures that my own boys and girls [students] could do under my direction and supervision. I received a great number of compliments from our own people and from people [who] came to visit my room from the state, the county and various areas because of the artwork that we were able to do in our school. I have enjoyed life very much since I retired. Because of the fact that I was a gardener before I retired, I could just take up and go right on and do gardening and really enjoy it. I have never felt the effects of a break, very much, in having to quit teaching.

In a civic way in our town, I have been active all my life. I served for eighteen years as city councilman; not eighteen consecutive years, but eighteen years doing council work. I was mayor of the city for four years during the time of [The] Depression. Many of the projects that were done here during WPA [Works Progress Administration] days were done [during] my time as mayor — rock ditches and other things which stand as a monument to hard times and The Depression. We would have never [had] them if it hadn't been for that [program]. I have served in other capacities in our ward, as city clerk, the health officer [and] many of the other smaller jobs. I feel that I have contributed considerably to the growth and development of our town.

I have been busy all my life in the church. Shortly after I married and started teaching school, I was chosen to be bishop's counselor to Arthur Paxman. At that time, I was only about twenty-six years old. About a year after I became counselor to Bishop Paxman, he died and I became the bishop. I was bishop of our ward here for about five years. I look back upon those days with a lot of joy and satisfaction. I can remember many of the boys, especially in the Priesthood, [who] grew up under my direction at that time, especially the deacons. I was very active at that time in [Boy] Scouts [of America] work [as] a scoutmaster. After I was bishop for about five years, I had to go to the bottom of the ladder and start to climb up again. I was Mutual [Improvement Association] president for a period of two or three years and then became Sunday school superintendent. I had this position for a number of years. During all this time, I taught in either one of the organizations. I have always enjoyed teaching, not only in common day school, but also in our church organizations. I was stake clerk under President [Harold P.] Snow for three years. I enjoyed that very much. The experience was very gratifying and helpful. In the ward I taught the gospel doctrine class. I don't have any accurate record of it, but I suppose it would [have] been for at least twenty years. I am still teaching it and enjoy it very much. I have a big class each Sunday and people seem to appreciate me as a teacher.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: With your experience, having taught so many people in this area and [being] so widely known, this has drawn you into other activities of a peculiar nature, perhaps. Are you known for speaking at funerals?

VI: Yes, this is one area [in which] I have had a great amount of experience. I never did consider myself as what you would call a speaker. I think this was one of my poorest attributes. Even during the time I was a bishop, I felt that I was a poor speaker. My experience as a teacher and with growing up with them has given me many, many opportunities to speak at funerals. I have kept records [and] have spoken at fifty-nine funerals during my life since I was bishop. These funerals have been of boys and girls that I have known, that I taught in school [and] parents of those boys and girls [who] came to my [classes]. It has always been a great privilege and opportunity to have this experience. It hasn't always been easy; funerals are never easy to speak at. I have taken a lot of joy and satisfaction because of this opportunity and [the] respect that people have had for me in asking me to do this.

FH: It speaks well for you when people want you to speak at the funeral.

VI: I went as far as 700 miles or a little better, to the little town on the border of Nevada and Oregon to speak [at] a man's funeral [who] married a girl from this town. On a number of occasions they [had been in] my Sunday school class and knew me because of our association here. About three years before this man died, he had become a member of the church, had gone through the temple and had his family, his boys, sealed to him. Before he died, I was asked if I would come up there and speak [at] his funeral. I told him, "Yes, I would." It was quite unique, because I was in a town of Basques and primarily Catholics. This was an experience I had never had before. I was sure that what I said there was appreciated by the people and accepted very well by those who were at the funeral.

FH: If you were able to do just what you would like to do the most for the rest of your life, [do] you have a preference?

VI: My second love to teaching was to garden, grow flowers and do things outside. One of the first things I did after I quit teaching school was to gather rocks, along with Austin, because he has a great love for rocks also. [I] gathered rocks [and] plants to build a rock and cactus garden. I took a lot of joy and satisfaction doing that. A lot of people, other than my own family, have enjoyed and taken pleasure in my rock garden. I really enjoy doing things on the outside. I still get a great amount of pleasure out of raising a garden [and] seeing things grow. I think it is challenging to compete with the soil, with [the] insects, with the weather and to plan from one year to another what you are going to grow, to see if you can't do it just a little better. I think next to my being well-known in the country [area] because of my career as a teacher, is my career as a gardener. I am known

throughout this area because of potatoes, corn, cantaloupes and many of the other things that I have grown in my garden over a number of years. In this way, I have made many friends and acquaintances from as far south as Las Vegas to [the] north in Cedar City, where people come to buy from me. It is always satisfying to grow things to sell, but it is more satisfying to be able to grow them, to know that you can accomplish — accomplishment is actually what is the most satisfying of all the things you do.

FH: After a tremendous lifetime of experiences teaching, [would] you [like] to leave counsel and advice to those who shall come after you? Then perhaps you would like to bear your testimony.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

VI: As I have relived my life in a few moments here, I must agree with you that my life has been very satisfying and rich. I have lived out my three-score and ten [years] and have enjoyed most of the good things that life has to offer. The greatest amount of satisfaction to any of us, and I would say this to my own children and others, comes from being willing to work, to serve, to be willing to think of other people and their problems, to have compassion [and] empathy for those who are not so fortunate, to look to the brighter things in life and the hope that life gives to us. Our greatest joy comes from the opportunities that we are given to serve, both in our communities and in our church. Our testimonies will only grow and be meaningful to us as we live to develop them. I would like to say and bear my testimony that I know that the Lord has placed us here for a purpose. He has given us [an] opportunity to work out our own salvation in our own way, doing the things that we like to do and enjoy doing, enjoying the company and companionship of our family, to see them grow and develop and also accomplish.

I have great faith in the leadership of our church. I would like to bear testimony, especially to my own family, that I know the gospel is true, that Jesus is our Christ, that Joseph Smith came to this earth as a prophet. The church has been restored for our good and for our benefit. We are here as redeemers of Israel [and] have a great mission that can only be accomplished through hard work, diligence and earnest desire.

[END OF RECORDING THREE. END OF INTERVIEW.]

ADDENDUM ADDED TO VICTOR E. IVERSON TRANSCRIPTION

Added during editing May 2009

Victor E. Iverson was born in Washington [City, Washington County] Utah on March 7, 1897, the first of twelve children to Edward Miller and Eveline (Boggs) Iverson. His life was centered around schools, church and the community. He was a lifetime resident of Washington City. He attended and graduated from Dixie College [St. George, Washington County, Utah], Southern Utah University [Cedar City, Iron County, Utah] and Utah State College [Logan, Cache County, Utah] with a degree in education. He was employed over forty years as an educator, which included teaching and twenty years as principal of the Washington [City] school.

He served as the mayor [of Washington City] and also [was] on its city council for fourteen years, was active in civic affairs [and] an active member of The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. He served as a Bishop, High Priest and High Priest group instructor.

[Victor E.] was well-known for his gardening and the produce he [grew]. As an avid reader, he kept aware of current events. In his later years, he enjoyed painting [with] oils and watercolors and enjoyed sharing his talents with others.

He married Erma Reber from Santa Clara [Washington County, Utah] on September 5, 1922 in the St. George Temple. They had three children, Austin, Maxine and Mervin. At the age of ninety-one [Victor E.] passed away [on] March 30, 1988.