

**Interview with**  
**ROWENA (WHITMORE) BUNDY**

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**Prior to November 20, 2015**

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## INDEX

|                                                  | Page                                       |
|--------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------|
| Arizona Strip                                    | 5, 7, 10, 17                               |
| Birthday                                         | 17, 23                                     |
| Boulder City, NV                                 | 24                                         |
| Buggy                                            | 10                                         |
| Building                                         | 7, 14, 22, 24                              |
| Bundy, Abraham [father-in-law]                   | 5, 6, 9                                    |
| Bundy, Ada Adell [daughter]                      | 6, 8, 10, 19                               |
| Bundy, Dean Olean [son]                          | 6                                          |
| Bundy, Ella (Anderson) [mother-in-law]           | 5                                          |
| Bundy, Ellen [daughter - twin to Nora]           | 6, 7, 9 - 11, 13, 15                       |
| Bundy, Emer Paul [son]                           | 5 - 7, 10, 15, 23                          |
| Bundy, Glendon Blaine [son]                      | 6, 11                                      |
| Bundy, Nora [daughter - twin to Ellen]           | 6, 7, 9, 11, 13                            |
| Bundy, Omer "Dick" [husband]                     | 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 13, 15,<br>20, 22, 23, 26 |
| Bundy, Rey Lucero [son]                          | 6, 7, 10, 11                               |
| Bundy, Richard Moroni [son - died 1932]          | 6, 8                                       |
| Bundy, Rowena (Whitmore)                         | 5                                          |
| Bundy, Stanley [son]                             | 6, 12                                      |
| Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, The | 18, 21, 23                                 |
| Colorado River                                   | 8                                          |
| Dance                                            | 6, 21                                      |
| Doctor                                           | 8, 11                                      |
| Eureka, UT                                       | 7, 10, 16                                  |
| Farm                                             | 9, 12                                      |
| Freedom                                          | 5, 13                                      |
| Ford                                             | 5                                          |
| Garage                                           | 8                                          |
| Garden                                           | 11, 12                                     |
| Hardships                                        | 11, 16, 20                                 |
| Henderson, NV                                    | 24                                         |
| Home                                             | 5 - 7, 9 - 14, 20, 21,<br>24               |
| Homesteading                                     | 17, 18                                     |
| Horses                                           | 9                                          |

|                                               |                                  |
|-----------------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Iverson, Estella “Stella” (Wharton) [aunt]    | 18                               |
| Jepko, Herb                                   | 25                               |
| Lake Mead, NV                                 | 20                               |
| Las Vegas, NV                                 | 5, 7, 9, 18, 19,<br>23, 24       |
| Logandale, NV                                 | 5                                |
| Magna, UT                                     | 22                               |
| Mellin’s Food                                 | 10                               |
| Milking                                       | 9 – 11                           |
| Miner, Nancy Elizabeth [maternal grandmother] | 6                                |
| Mission                                       | 15, 21, 22                       |
| Moapa Valley, NV                              | 20                               |
| Muddy River, NV                               | 20                               |
| Orph [horse]                                  | 9                                |
| Overson, NV                                   | 20                               |
| Parashant, AZ                                 | 17                               |
| Piano                                         | 23, 24                           |
| Pigeon Wash, AZ                               | 5                                |
| Pond                                          | 11, 16                           |
| Poverty Mountain, AZ                          | 5                                |
| St. George Temple                             | 18, 19, 21 – 23                  |
| Salt Lake City, UT                            | 21, 23, 25                       |
| School                                        | 6, 9 – 11, 13, 14, 16,<br>23, 25 |
| Singing                                       | 20, 24, 25                       |
| Ullock, Jeanette (Whitmore) [sister]          | 5, 22                            |
| Weston, George                                | 16                               |
| Weston, Jack                                  | 16                               |
| Whitmore, Ellen Elizabeth [sister]            | 22                               |
| Whitmore, Glendon Montgomery [brother]        | 22                               |
| Whitmore, Onel Moroni [brother]               | 22                               |
| Whitmore, Ruth Ada [sister]                   | 22                               |
| Wyoming                                       | 23                               |
| Zion National Park, UT                        | 10, 11                           |

## ROWENA (WHITMORE) BUNDY

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Rowena (Whitmore) Bundy was interviewed prior to November 20, 2015 in St. George, Washington County, Utah by her niece by marriage Helen (Bundy) Russell. She related her life experiences.

HR: Rowena, what do you remember about the Arizona Strip when you went out there?

RB: I don't remember what year it was that we went out there, but we were living in Las Vegas [Nevada]. Omer ["Dick" Bundy] always wanted to go out there because his folks [Abraham and Ella (Anderson) Bundy] were out there. So he traded for a team and a wagon and we went on out on the Strip. We went down through Logandale, Nevada on out to Pigeon [Wash] and on out over [Poverty] Mountain. When we [were] on top of Poverty Mountain, Omer said, "Well, this is the place." I looked down and all I could see were cedar trees and a little bit of smoke coming out of a house here and there. I thought: man this can't be! Anyway, we went on down and stayed with his mother and [the family]. He went on up to the sawmill and [picked up] some lumber. We stayed there until winter time. When winter came, we didn't have anything [to do] and no place to go much. They just lived in that small little home that they had.

Mamie [(Bundy) May's] husband, [Ernest James May], came out there deer hunting with one of his friends. I asked Omer if he wouldn't ask him if we could go back to Las Vegas, Nevada with him. He asked him and they said sure. They were in a Ford car. We went back to [Las] Vegas and stayed for the winter. The next spring he wanted to go back out, so we went, but he let me go up to Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah] with my sister [Jeanette (Whitmore) Ullock]. He went out and built the house for us and [had] it just about completed. Then we went back to Las Vegas and [that] is when our boy, Emer [Paul Bundy, came down with] typhoid fever.

He was [very] sick and we didn't know what was wrong with him. He had whooping cough when we first went to [Las] Vegas, and we just about lost him. We went back on out on the Strip, he [was] well enough so that we could go, and we stayed there for the summer. The next year we went back to Las Vegas and worked for the year and then we went back out there. It was quite a trial to me because I had never ever done these kinds of things before, and to go where there wasn't any water or anything like this was something — just so new and so different.

HR: Real hard.

RB: [Laughter] I never dreamed that people were living that way now-a-days after coming from a place like Springville [Utah County, Utah] and my part of the

town. But he built the little house there. When we got out there, we planted the crops and always looked forward to the rains that came and filled our ponds. [We] got a few head of cattle. The children, [Emer Paul, Rey Lucero, Nora, Ellen, Ada Adell, Dean Olean, Richard Moroni and Stanley James all were born prior to the family's move to St. George, Washington County, Utah in 1935], all enjoyed it. They all thought it was really a wonderful place because they never really knew anything too much different. They did have their freedom out there and they would go up on the mountains and gather the wildflowers. We had a few head of cows we milked, so we got along alright, only that there weren't any jobs out there. So [Omer] would have to go away every now and then, find work, pay off our bills [and] then come back for awhile and stay. After awhile he would have to go back on a job again and pay off the bills again, because you had to eat! [Inaudible] [Laughter]

HR: Yes.

RB: This way, we got along fine and enjoyed it while we were there until every year it seemed to begin to get drier and drier out there. I remember the time that we used to go over to the schoolhouse for the Fourth of July. We always took a little something to eat, all thrown in together, had a program, ball games, races, a big meal and then a big dance afterwards. [Do] you remember them?

HR: Oh, you bet! [Laughter]

RB: They were [very] nice and everybody was just like one big family out there for quite a long time and really enjoyed [those events]. As it got drier, people began to feel like, I guess, they couldn't quite make it anyway. We couldn't see much future for us out there. We never could get ahead. We didn't have any more when we left than we had when we went there. I hoped and prayed that something would come up [so] that we could leave. I didn't feel like we could get anywhere if we stayed there any longer. We were there ten years. He came in to town [St. George] here and when he came back he said, "I bought a place in town." I said, "Oh, you just couldn't!" He said "I have!" I said, "How nice!" Then he told me about where it was. Then he went up to the saw mill to work. As quick as school was out, your daddy [Roy Bundy] was coming in with a load of wood and I asked him if he would bring us in. I had already ordered a coal oil stove from Sears, [Roebuck and Co.]. I had written and asked your grandpa [Abraham] Bundy if we could [use] their little tent to live in until we could build a place. They [had] just built their home here so they weren't using it.

Your daddy brought me and the children in and he went up to grandpas and got some of these big old telephone poles, got the tent on them and pulled it down here under the shade trees. We didn't have much out there from there on out. We went out and kind of, more or less, took care of our cattle. When I first went out there, we went out to the saw mill and went to work. I cooked up there and he worked for lumber. That was how we [obtained] the lumber to build our place out

there. Then he worked at the saw mill and got enough lumber to [add] on to the tent. It was an eighteen-by-eighteen-[foot tent]. Then we built a twelve-by-twelve-[foot] front of it. We lived in that until we built our basement and the rest of the place. So there isn't a whole lot for me to tell [about] in the ten years that we were there, only that it was just a routine [laughter] like all the rest of the [time].

HR: Did you have any children when you first went out there other than Emer?

RB: No.

HR: How old is Emer?

RB: How old is Emer now?

HR: Yes.

RB: I think he's —.

HR: Or what year was he born? Do you know this?

RB: Not unless I go get my *Book of Remembrance* that has their births [recorded]. Do you want me to give you the dates of those [who] were born out there?

HR: It might be a good idea [inaudible].

RB: He [Emer] was born up in Eureka [Juab County, Utah on] August 5, 1919.

HR: You already had him, so you must have [gone] out —.

RB: We went out [on the Arizona Strip] and then we went out to Las Vegas and Rey [Lucero] was born in [Las] Vegas. Then we went back out [on the Arizona Strip] after he was born. [We were] out there awhile and then we went back to [Las] Vegas a second time and worked for a little while. Then we went out and stayed. We had to have squatters rights out there and so, of course, we had to go out there and [inaudible] a certain length of time to be able to claim it. [For] the rest of [the children], I always came in to town and had them because they told me not to stay out there.

HR: I can remember when you lived here in the tent while you were building your home here.

RB: Yes.

HR: You were still living in the tent when the twins [Nora and Ellen] were born. No, no, you were out there!

RB: Yes.

HR: I can't remember what your baby was named [who] died out there

RB: Richard [Moroni Bundy].

HR: Richard?

RB: Yes.

HR: And [Ada] Adell [Bundy] was just a little girl?

RB: Yes.

HR: And how sad [she was]. She just sobbed her little heart out. I can still remember seeing her sob and sob. [Laughter]

RB: [Laughter] It was hard out there in a way because we didn't have any doctors or anything to take care of them. Seems like you had to come to town and we didn't have a car then that was running. When we had the twins, we came in the car that we did have when we first went out there. We were the first ones [who] had a car when we went out there. We were the only ones [who] didn't have one when we left. So that was the progress that we made when we were out there. [Laughter]

HR: [Laughter]

RB: But we come in to have [the twins]. He [Omer] said, "If that car ever took us back out there [I'll] take it out there and put it behind the garage and there it [will] stay." The one year that we were out there, we raised a lot of corn. He took it and stacked it into the garage where he had made a little place for the car. He was always prospecting, down to the [Colorado] River or down on the hills. You know how he always liked to prospect. He came back with these caps and he said, "I don't know where to put them." I said, "Whatever you do, don't put them anywhere around here." I said, "You go out, way out, and find an old cedar tree and bury them under that tree somewhere. Then mark the tree so you'll know where they are." Pretty soon he came back to the house and said he had put them up in a good place; he didn't think we needed to worry. But in the fall was when he filled the [garage] full of fodder, hay.

One day I was sweeping the floor and I looked down. There was [a] kind of a bullet [and [it] looked like it had been shot. I didn't know much about these kinds of things. I was so green about all of these different things that went on, but I picked it up. I thought: I will lay it up here and when he comes I'll ask him about it. It's a wonder I didn't put it in the stove, but I just had that feeling that I better wait and see what he thought. When he came in he said, "My word, that is [one of] those caps that I have hidden." I said, "Where have you hidden them?" Then

we found two or three of them had been chewed on the ends. Nora and Ellen had gone up there and climbed up on the top of that [fodder] and chewed those [caps] on the end. If they [would] have [chewed] down a little bit further, it would have blown their heads clear off.

HR: It would have blown mine off!

RB: I know it! I'm telling you, I was so upset about that. He figured he had them in a good place. That is the way it sometimes goes. We had quite a time out there with our cattle and different things. I look back at my life sometimes and think maybe I really was supposed to do this, because when I was a girl at home I lived on the farm with my grandmother [Nancy Elizabeth Miner] quite a bit. I liked to go out to the farm, and they let me go. They taught me how to milk cows, but I never dreamed then that I would ever have to milk a cow. The boys thought that if I would help them milk two or three cows, that would be that much less that they would have to milk and they would get through that much sooner.

When we went out on the Strip we had to milk the cows because [Omer] was gone a lot of time on trap lines and off on jobs. So I learned to milk the cows and to separate the milk. When I was on the farm in Springville, I learned how to saddle horses and how to hook up a horse. I was sort of a tom boy, I guess, on the farm. My sister [Ellen Elizabeth Whitmore] worked inside. Grandmother only had two girls and they were both gone, so my sister kind of lived with them. She worked and helped grandmother. The boys always felt like I was one of them out on the farm, so I did a little bit of everything. When I went out on the Strip, I wasn't too bad off to know how to do things. I usually saddled up the horses for us to go to school and when they come home at night.

We had these two horses. One we named "Orph." When Omer first went out on the Strip, he took these two horses out there. Then when we went back to Las Vegas, his daddy [Abraham] took care of them, but they were over on our place. The lightning came and hit the mother and left the little colt. Grandpa ran on to them [and] took it. He had a horse that the colt was about ready to be weaned, and so he let the little colt go on that. When it grew up, we called [him] "Orph" because it was an orphan.

HR: Yes.

RB: [The children] would take that horse and we had one of these — I don't know what you call it.

HR: [A] one horse shay?

RB: Yes, a one horse shay. They would drive back and forth to school because we lived two-and-one-half miles from the school. Adell was the littlest one [and] just [starting] school. She would go over there with them in the morning and then she

was out at noon. She would bring the horse and buggy back and [the others] would stay until [later] and then they would walk home. They would take that horse over there, tie him up, when school was out at noon, they would go and untie the horse and she would come home. Sometimes she never ever touched those reins, she just fastened them around the brake and the horse would come on home. Sometimes it would be so cold that she [would] bundle all up into a quilt to keep warm. That horse had two and three gates to go through and he never ever hubbed a gate in all that time. We thought he was a pet. We thought the world of him. There was no horse like that horse. [Omer] had other horses and lots of times he would get so out of patience with them. He said they went along for company because they would also let the singletree go as far back as they dared until he would get after them and start them up again.

We had to have cisterns out there to [hold] our water. Most everybody had a cistern. [Omer] was out filling that cistern one day and the [children were] were out playing around. They were looking in it to see how the water was filtering in. I said to him, "Whatever you do now, don't let one of those little [children] fall in there." He said, "Oh, I'm watching them." I was standing there doing dishes [and] pretty soon I stepped to the door and I couldn't see Rey. I thought: he must be in there. I ran out there and looked down and sure enough there he was in the cistern. The water was up to my knees, so I reached down as fast as I could and pulled him up out of that cistern. [Laughter]

HR: [Laughter]

RB: I was out there for three months all alone [while] he was up in Zion [National Park, Washington County, Utah] working on the road up there. We had quite a time finding milk that would agree with Ellen. In here [St. George], the cow's milk was alright, but when we got out there where the cows browsed there was too much curd in the milk and she couldn't digest it. I thought I would lose her [for] sure. I didn't know what else to do; I didn't know what else to give her. We would send in to town and get this kind of milk. Then we would get some other kind of milk, but there wasn't any of it that seemed to agree with her. Finally, I said, "I know the Dr. at home [Eureka, Juab County, Utah] [who] we worked for, raised his little girl on millet food." [Mellin's Food was an early form of Similac.] I thought: I wonder if we could get some? They had that little store down [in] Main Street [Valley run by Dexter Dan Mitchell] Parkers.

HR: Yes, [it was] at Wolf Hole [on the Arizona Strip].

RB: Yes. [Omer] asked Mr. Parker if he could get some of this milk. He said he would send and get some for us. He did and it agreed with her [very] fine. You have to mix it with a different kind of milk, but it dissolved the curd [and] agreed with her. We raised her on [Mellin's] food. It cost us a big sum of money to have to buy that by the case. That was when [Omer] was up in Zion trying to work [to] pay for that and get a few clothes for the [children] for winter. These were

hardships to have to go through. Then, with their sickness and no doctors, you didn't hardly know what to do for them. I guess the Lord was with us though because they all seemed to pull through pretty good. Nora had a time with her ears for awhile. Then she and Rey had their tonsils out, but it still didn't help. It helped her hearing some, but after she had the measles, she never had any more earaches, but she doesn't hear out of that ear.

HR: She can't hear out of one ear?

RB: Yes, she had infection in it. Of course, in those days, they didn't know much that you could do for it either. I know that Glendon [Blaine] had earaches [very] bad at one time. We did everything that we could think of. We had taken him to the doctor and he had given us some medicine for him, but it was still terribly bad. We called the elders in and [the earache] left him right now. These things, I think, are nice and we had happy days out there along with the other [times]. You get them wherever you go.

HR: Yes, we all have our troubles one way or the other; I don't know of anybody right here [who] doesn't have troubles one way or the other.

RB: That is right, you did have that for sure. This is about all that I can remember [about] out there. I know that we had to go over 640 acres to get a milk cow. When I had Ellen [inaudible] on the milk, well, I had to have milk. I would get up in the mornings and had to go out and find that cow. Sometimes I would be gone for a long time and had to leave the little ones there to the house with the warm fire. Didn't know what they might do, but I had to take that chance. I would go out over that 640 acres and finally [find] the cow and get enough milk to fix her milk for her for the day. At times, we had [it] hard. We didn't have anything but bread and milk and bread and milk. We lived for six months with nothing but bread and milk. We came in to St. George and the [children] started school in here. They examined Rey and they sent a note home. They said he was perfect in every way; there wasn't a thing wrong with him. So I guess the bread and milk [was okay]. [Laughter]

HR: [Laughter] I remember you [growing] a good garden down there in that kind of pond or swamp.

RB: He called it [a] sink hole.

HR: Sink hole, yes!

RB: The water would run down there when we would have a storm. The water would run down in there and sometimes he would have quite a nice garden in there. Then it would storm and flood it all. The years that we had normal storms, he would come down and irrigate it and it held the water pretty good. So we did

have, for being out there and no more rain and all that we had, we did have quite a nice garden several times.

HR: Yes.

RB: But it wasn't anything like where I was raised on the farm up in Springville.

HR: No! You had all the water that you wanted. I should say not.

RB: We had everything there and then to go out on the dry farm, it was just a contrast to me that I sometimes wondered about it.

HR: Yes, I'm sure that you did.

RB: But we made it! Like I say, that is all in the past now and we have to look for the —.

HR: Future, that's right! How many children do you have, Aunt Rowena?

RB: I had eleven [children]!

HR: Eleven? Are they all living except the one?

RB: Yes! I have ten living; five boys and five girls. They are all around, here and there and everywhere. I guess Emer is coming home for the reunion!

HR: Oh is he?

RB: Dean's coming home for the reunion.

HR: Yes.

RB: I don't know whether Stanley will make it or not. He didn't know either. I [received] a letter from his wife [Chyrrell Demille] and she said she might come. She didn't think that Stanley was going to be able to get off [work] unless something came up so that he could.

HR: Yes.

RB: I don't know how many of them will be there, but Emer's boys [Merlin Paul Bundy, Russell Reid Bundy, Darrell Emer Bundy, Curtis Farrell Bundy] want to go out again. They think it is just great out there and so they want to go. The one boy [Russell Reid Bundy] is in the [United States] Navy, so he will fly to Cedar [City, Iron County, Utah] or so Emer said. They will pick him up in Cedar [City] and that will be his vacation from [military] service.

HR: It seems like all the [young ones] like it out there.

RB: There is a certain freedom out there, it makes you feel so free. They can do the things that they really want to do. They can get out and go hunting. They [can] just [do] so many nice things. I guess this is what really is quite attractive to them. I know that is what my girls tell me every now and then. "Mother, you probably didn't know that we went up on the ledge and rolled rocks down off of the ledge like we did and gathered the wildflowers, and did all of these things." I kind of knew that they did.

They had to walk two miles and a half from school to home and in the winter time it was pretty rough. They would rather walk sometimes than to ride because it was so cold riding. I remember one storm that we had out there. It was so bad that I didn't let Nora [and] the others go, but Ellen went. She wasn't about to stay home, so I let her go. When night [time] came and it started getting so cold and another storm was coming in, I thought: I'll wait and watch. I waited and I watched and when it was about time for school to be out, I just kept looking out the door when I thought she would [have] had time to come home. Pretty soon I looked up and she was just coming through the cedars and I could see that she was staggering along in the snow. Omer was just coming [in] with the cattle and I told him to go and get her. He went up there and just barely got to her when she fell. She was just that numb from [the] cold. We put her hands and feet in right cold water and began to bring the life back in to them. She [was] alright. Omer would be out on the trap line and the [youngsters] would be [at] school. I would go to one door looking for him and then I would go to the other door looking for the [children]. I always worried about somebody kidnapping them out there.

HR: Oh?

RB: There were always people coming out there to see the country. I kept telling them, "Don't you ever ride with anybody. I don't care who it is. If they come along and ask you if you would like a ride, you tell them no, that you are not going to ride." But I look back now and think for heaven's sake, they could have gotten out, jumped and grabbed those [youngsters] and put them in their car, [laughter] and they wouldn't have had any choice.

HR: Yes. [Laughter]

RB: How many people were there out there all at one time? Can you remember? There was quite a little settlement wasn't there?

HR: Yes, there was. I heard some of them say there was 100 [people] in the ward. But it seems to me like there was more than that.

RB: Does it?

HR: But I don't know.

RB: I don't know, it seemed like that building was so big. The little schoolhouse wasn't so very big. Then when they built that other one, it seems like, that was a big old schoolhouse. Then after we came in here, this was one thing I didn't like living out in a place like that. When I come in to town [St. George] here, I was afraid to even go across the street [because of] cars that were going [by], but after I was in here for a little while, it didn't mean anything.

HR: I remember how big I thought that schoolhouse was and the last few times I went in there, it grew [smaller]! [Laughter]

RB: That's right! I looked at it a time or two and I thought: it never could have been so big. [Laughter] Then after my girls [were] married they all lived down in California. I went down [to] California at [a] big Mayfair [Markets] store. That was so big I thought: that place out on the Strip was a baby.

HR: Yes, I'll say! [Laughter]

RB: It was only two-by-fours!

HR: Yes!

RB: I guess everybody out there really had experiences alright. Then, I guess, you get them. We had them in here, after we came in here to build our home and to do the things we have done to get where we [are], but we had a drawback out there with water.

HR: Yes!

RB: If we would have had the water, people still would have still been there. They would have built homes and we would have had something.

HR: I know this!

RB: Where it just kept getting drier and drier, it seemed like there wasn't anything much [reason] for a person to stay. We were the first ones to leave out there. We were about the last ones to go out there and the first ones to leave and [move] into town. Some of them I guess [who] were out there, like your mama [Doretta (Iverson) Bundy], like Aunt Chloe [Geneva (VanLeuven) Bundy]. Has Aunt Chloe told her [story] of it yet?

HR: Yes, we, Nellie [(Iverson) Cox] and I, went up there and visited with her and Uncle "Jim" [James Bundy] one day. We [should] have started on this about ten years ago [as] memories are slipping [and] they can't remember. Of course me, I never could remember and I am not getting any better.

RB: [Laughter] You are not alone in that respect, anyway.

HR: I know, but it seems to be lots of people [are] this way.

RB: It makes it hard lots of time, like when they wanted us to write our history. Omer wrote his two or three times. He wrote it once and then Yvonne [Cleo Yvonne Reid Bundy] wanted it. Then she said she lost it. I guess they must have run on to it or found it because they have a history of Omer now. Then he wrote one [with Fielding Harris for the *Voices of Remembrance* Project in 1968]. [He was] coming around getting our life histories. He wrote one with him. He wanted me to [write one], too. I wrote one too, but then I never traveled around the country like he did. Like with him, [he was] in old Mexico, then up in Oregon and all over. He had a lot of memories that he could tell. He had a good memory, right up until the very last. The last year or so, he complained quite a bit about not being able to remember, but up until then, he could tell things. He would always say after they were gone, "Now I can remember this, but I didn't tell them. Now, I can remember that [information] that I should have given him."

The last [history] that he [wrote], he went into details that weren't so interesting, but his first one was [very] good. Emer has it and he has taped it off for Ellen. When [the] boys went on their [LDS] mission, Don [Donald Cliff Reid] and Dean Jr., [Dean Olean Bundy Jr.] she played it for them. They were really taken up with it. Yes, she sent a little bit of it to Don.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

RB: [Inaudible]

HR: Doesn't that make you feel wonderful when we were that way? [Inaudible] Our [children] would just go wild, [which] was just great! I guess the grown people did too; they were just able to cover theirs up more and didn't let it out like we [youngsters] did. [Laughter]

RB: [Laughter] They just kind of relaxed. They thought: the ponds are full [and] we have water for the cows.

HR: Yes, and the feed will grow, and we will have a great time!

RB: Yes, that's right. It's too bad that there wasn't water out there of some [amount]. [Of] course, like they say, if there had have been, there wouldn't have been the land, because people would have already taken it. I know when Ellen was going to school up here, one of the teachers was telling them in high school that the Bundy's went out on the Strip and took their grazing ground away from them out there and they weren't what they ought to be or they wouldn't have done such a thing to the people in town here. [Of] course they had cattle out there.

HR: Sure, they had cattle out there, but that was free country. We had just as much right to it as they did.

RB: Sure, but then they thought that they had the cattle and they wanted it. But they wouldn't go out there and stay, wives wouldn't go out there for anything, with all the hardships and to claim the land or anything. They just felt like it was free grazing and they could just have all they wanted of it and they were doing just fine. Then to think that the Bundy's went out there and took up those sections and then they couldn't run their cattle and their sheep. I think that they ran cattle and sheep out there and then [the] Taylor Grazing [Act] came in [June 28, 1934].

HR: Yes.

RB: Then, like I say, Helen, you can remember some things. Do you remember when they had all that shooting out there? [Laughter] I don't know if anyone else has said anything else about the shooting or not.

HR: Yes, some of them have told about it. About [Thevas] the Greek getting shot?

[Thevas, the Greek, worked for Milt George Pappas herding sheep. Jim Hudson shot him in a dispute over water. The pond was then known as Dead Greek Pond.]

RB: No, ["Old Man White," Mr. [James "Jim"] White, up on top of the mountain.

HR: Yes, Mr. White [was] killed.

["Old Man White," as he was known, was shot by Al Craig in a feud over water.]

RB: Yes. Did they tell about, what was their names? He was trying to get away from the law? You went over there to his place one time.

HR: Yes. Bessie [(Bundy) Faught] was over there and I went over for her — Jack Weston.

RB: Yes, that's who it was.

HR: George Weston lived out there and Jack Weston was his brother. Yes, I [have] that.

RB: The people [who] lived down there, Helen, in that canyon, or they lived over there on the — whose place was it? Somebody's place over there. We went over there on their birthday. He had heart trouble and had to take pills all the time. I think it was down in one of the canyons and one of them died down there. They had to go down and get them. There was a man and two women. Do you remember them? I

remember you were over there [at] the social we were having over there, or the birthday dinner we had.

HR: Over [at] Parashant?

RB: They never had any children. They said they were from back east and they never had any children or any kinfolk that I knew of out there. [They] were all by themselves.

HR: I can't remember that.

RB: You don't remember that?

HR: No.

RB: I can remember, [but] I know you were over there. Most all the community cooked up something and went over there and had a big dinner. Wasn't it [John] Hallmark? Who else was it that had a place over there?

HR: Oh, there was Alcorn.

RB: Alcorn! We were over on the [Charles Wesley] Alcorn's place. I remember that.

HR: Alcorn, he didn't have any wife with him. He had his two boys [George and Charles], and a girl [Florence].

RB: Well, but he left and these here people were living in his place there.

HR: Oh?

RB: If I remember right.

HR: Then the Duncans. They lived there. Elmo [Aaron "Frosty" Bundy] has that place.

RB: No!

HR: Yes.

RB: Now was that where his first wife was out there? Is that where he met his first wife?

HR: Yes. Catherine Woods [the daughter of Roy Woods] yes, they were out there.

RB: Maybe it was the Woods place, I don't know, that these people were on. They left out there.

HR: Yes, maybe it was them. I don't know. I can't remember the party. This is my trouble, I can't remember so many things and they come out different. I got [the] tapes and they will tell different things. You will remember that, you were there, but I can't. When they [start] talking about it, [things] kind of come to my mind and I remember and other times I can't remember at all.

RB: You can remember "Stella's" folks, [William and Cordelia Wharton who] came out there?

HR: Aunt [Estella] "Stella" [Wharton] Iverson? Yes.

RB: [Does] she have her part? Have they told their [stories] too?

HR: Yes.

RB: You have their stories too? You have just about everything that took place around [here].

HR: We even [have] Luther Swanner. He was over there with Jim Hudson. He was one of the [fellows who] was there when [the] Greek [was] killed. He joined The Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] a few years ago. He has been up to the temple [with] his wife [Mabel Swanner]. They lived in [Las] Vegas. Nellie Cox's son-in-law [Elwin Jones] baptized him.

RB: Well, for heavens sakes.

HR: I [was able] to see Perlie Morris and talk to him. It was great to see him again.

RB: I'll bet so!

HR: It has been really fun to meet them, reminisce and [have them] tell their experiences when they were out there. Some of them were sad, some were fun and some of them were just darn hard-working. [Laughter]

RB: It is funny, how down in Las Vegas they can do things this way. Adell, was telling about Delon [Merill Delon Winsor]. He married outside of the church, too. Of course, this girl [Jeanette Lorraine Converes] [who] he married, her folks don't belong to any church what-so-ever, so it didn't make any difference to them. Finally, they bought one of these low-cost housing homes there. It is right over there, not too far from Adell. Adell said that this wife of Delon's, on her mother's side and her sister's side, quite a bit, they don't have [any] interest in [the church] what-so-ever. But now that she met this little neighbor girl, now she is a strong Latter-day Saint. She has taken up with Jeanette [Lorraine Converes] and [is] teaching her how to sew and to do all of these little things. Now she has her going to Relief Society and Delon is just tickled to death. [Laughter] Before she gets

through, she might be [a Latter-day Saint]. And I thought, these things [could] turn around [inaudible].

HR: Yes, they can!

RB: You see those [fellows on] the Strip and [think] they will never be anything, only just what they are, and then they come to church and [go] over to the temple.

HR: Yes, Luther Swanner comes up quite regularly, goes through and works in the temple.

RB: For heaven's sake. I don't know him. I don't know too many of them out there. There were some of them, [Bill] Cobb [who] was out there. You remember Cobb, don't you, [who] lived out there?

HR: Cobb? I remember the name.

RB: Yes. He married some girl in here [St. George]. He kind of left the [area], but he was quite a nice fellow [and] was really quite liked. There were quite a few of them.

HR: Yes, it is really surprising, isn't it? Of course, there are some things, I think we probably won't be able to print, because it might bring up hard feelings and we don't want [anything] like this. Yet, it is history [and] it actually happened.

RB: That is right. It is really fun!

HR: There are a lot of them [who] have repented and are going to church. Even our own [family] members, some of us, we did things that weren't right.

RB: That's right. We can always look back on all of those little things that we would like to forget and everything that you can remember. [Laughter]

HR: [Inaudible]

RB: Sometimes I think, if you could just forget all of those things. But those are the things it seems like you get [to thinking about] when you don't have much to do, and you're [by] yourself. First thing, you start thinking about [them].

HR: Yes.

RB: I guess about everybody is the same way, I don't know. Sometimes you wonder. We had hardships out there. I think, I can't forget that. You get through the past for the future, but you never forget the past.

HR: No.

RB: There are things that come along and you just don't forget it, that's all. It makes us wonder what the purpose of life is, and if we think [what is] really supposed to be, why they take place, why they have to be like they are and why they couldn't have been different. You look back and think it could have been different, but it wasn't. I think about that with Omer and I and our ways. He liked to be out in the woods and places like that, and I disliked, worse than anything, camping out. So this reunion is hard. Although, I can always feel like I never ever complained, I always went ahead and made the best of everything, tried to get by with it, but it really wasn't very easy, I'll tell you. How I met him, I just can't get over how things came around in a roundabout way. I could have been married to someone else when I was really quite a bit younger. But it seems like I never ever found anybody until I met him and I really cared about [him].

HR: Yes.

RB: It was funny when he left [from] down on the Muddy [River, known as the Moapa River] flows south through the Moapa Valley in Southern Nevada to its convergence with Lake Mead near the town of Overton] and he said he went up to the depot. He was going to take the first train up looking for work. He had been down there in the summertime and harvesting with all of them. Ed Van Leuven was up there in Eureka. Of course, they knew the VanLeuven's and all of them. He had been with them most of their lives. He said, well if [the train] goes south he would go south and if it goes north he would go north. So what does it do? The train comes a little bit north and he came to Eureka. I was singing in the choir at the time and I saw him down in the audience. I thought: he was sure a nice looking [fellow]. I thought to myself: you are for me, boy, when I grow up! Just kind of a fun [thought], like you will.

HR: Yes.

RB: I never really thought any more about it. I worked down there in the restaurant and every day [when] I would be going home he would be out there on the hose team. One day when I was coming home from work, we always had to walk, and they lived there just above us in Eureka. He was with Ed VanLeuven. Ed said that he had already had me picked out and was waiting for a chance, an opportunity, to introduce me to him. So when I walked right by him, Ed stopped me, and started talking to me. I slowed down, stopped and he introduced me to him. I can't even remember how, or where it was that he asked me if he could come to see me. I only went out with him about two or three times to a dance before he left to go on his [LDS] mission.

I wrote to him while he was on his mission. While he was on his mission, I knew he was going without hardly any means. It was hard [what] a lot of them did in those days. I thought: I would send him a little money to help him along on his

mission and he sent that money back so quick. He said, “You don’t buy my love with money.” [Laughter]

HR: [Laughter]

RB: And I didn’t send him anymore. [Laughter] I never thought anymore about it. I thought: I will just keep on writing to him, so I did. Every once in a while those drummers would come in and leave some candy for us to sample. I didn’t always care for the box of chocolates, so I would send it on to him. He said he could remember one time [when] I sent the candy they had been moving here and there on up the river. He hadn’t [received] his mail and thought that I wasn’t writing to him anymore. Then he went to this little [United States] Post Office, and there was this box of candy. He said he and Elder [Alvey] Fenn were just [worn] out, they had just been walking so much, and they sat down there by this stream. [When] they got that candy opened up, he said, Elder Fenn hadn’t had a bowel movement for I don’t know how long, and they just sat down there and ate that candy. They were both so hungry. [Laughter] [Inaudible] He said, “I’ll never forget that.”

HB: [Laughter]

RB: When he came back, I was going to meet him in Salt Lake [City]. I never had the least idea or thought about getting married, because he said what he did. I wasn’t pushing myself on to any of them. I had been out with other [fellows] all the time. He said, “Don’t you think we ought to get married while we are in here?” I said, “I don’t know.” I had never thought about getting married. I said, “I have no [temple] recommendation or anything to get married.” He said, “I can get you a recommendation.” I said, “Oh, can you?” He said, “Yes.” I think how green we were. [Laughter] He thought he knew where the courthouse was, so he went to my bishop and got my recommendation for me so that we could go to the [Salt Lake City] Temple. I never knew anything much about the temple. At home I had heard them say: go to the temple to get married. Whatever you do, marry in the temple, but it was all so new to me. I didn’t have a dress. I said to him, “I haven’t a dress or anything and don’t see how I could ever go to the temple.” “Oh, they have good dresses in there that they will loan [to] you.” He said, “You can rent a dress in there for practically nothing. I’m sure they would have something in there that would fit you.”

After he got my recommendation, then we went out to find the courthouse where we had to get our license. Here he was trailing me all over places that I couldn’t believe. I said to him, “What [are] you going this way for?” He said, “I’m looking for the courthouse.” I said, “Heavens, the courthouse isn’t here.” Because my girlfriend and I had been in Salt Lake [City before]. I had worked for President [Joseph F.] Smith in Salt Lake [City] and we would go over on the courthouse, sit there in the shade of the trees and [look at] the beautiful flowers. We had to turn around and go back another block or two to get to the courthouse. We got [there]

and got our license. He had to borrow some money off of the insurance that he had been carrying, or Ina [Ina Bundy Gifford, his sister] had been carrying for him while he had been in the mission field. He borrowed \$10.00 from his insurance and got my ring.

I was staying with Mrs. Eccles. She was a lady I worked for in Salt Lake [City]. She lived right up there by the [Utah State] Capitol building. She told me when I quit working for her [that] anytime I ever came to Salt Lake [City], I was always welcome to come there and stay. My dad was working out [in] Magna [Salt Lake County, Utah]. [Omer] wanted to go out there to see if it was alright with my dad [James Montgomery Whitmore]. We finally went on out there and we got to bed that evening. Then we came back to go to the temple. I remember going into the temple. The old blouse and skirt that I had on, I'm telling you, they didn't really fit. I didn't really look like anything in them [laughter], but that was all they had there that would fit me. So I went through [the temple]. Since it's your first [time], not knowing anybody or anything, I think it would be different now. You [would] know more or less what you are going through. Anyway, we went through and [were] married. He had a motel room [and] I was staying with her [Mrs. Eccles]. We went on [to] where Ina was working, or staying with this lady. She was going to have a supper for us. When I come out of the temple, I had this terrific headache. I could hardly see straight. We went in at 7:00 [a.m.] and we never got out until about 6:00 that night.

HR: Oh my!

RB: I was just really about worn clear out. After we had supper and we came back and I stayed at Mrs. Eccles. He went back to his hotel. We got up the next morning and I had to go back to work. I only had a little while off because I had only taken two or three days [off] and had to be back on the job. He had to go look for work because he didn't have any. It seemed, oh, so foolish now when I go back and think about it. If we had just waited, maybe it would have been for the best. You just don't know.

HR: No, no!

RB: We go along [with] these things like we do every day of our lives, like it is just an everyday occurrence. It just comes this way and this is it. This is the way we go, and like you say, we can look back and see the sad parts; we can look back and see the good [times].

HR: Right!

RB: If it could all be [good] and we could get through life that way, we would have felt a lot more happiness, but it isn't supposed to be that way. I think about all of my sisters, all of them married up there [Springville]. There weren't any of them that, well, one sister [was] married in the church. My brother [Glendon

Montgomery Whitmore] went away and married. The oldest brother [Onel Moroni Whitmore] didn't; he married a girl and they weren't married in the temple, but it wasn't long until they could go to the temple and were married, because her folks were [very] religious. [It] seems [inaudible]. My other sister [Jeanette Whitmore] married a fellow [who] was an Englishman, and he wouldn't have anything to do with the church. You couldn't even mention *The Book of Mormon* or anything to him. He was really against it. But he came into the church and they moved down into Springville. Down among the Mormons there and finally he came into the church. My other sister [Ruth Ada Whitmore] was a school teacher up in Wyoming. She met this husband of hers and he was a school teacher up there. They were married in the temple. But, my younger brother, [Glendon Montgomery Whitmore], went away and married, because his folks were really opposed to the girls marrying him. But they went through the temple [Salt Lake City] My younger sister [Ellen Elizabeth], married out of the church, too. But now she has been to the temple. All of them are widows.

HR: All of them are widows? All of you?

RB: Yes. My one sister lost her husband on [a] construction [job] in Nevada. [Inaudible] then she has been raising her family in Springville. The older sister, raised her family in Springville, too. In fact, all of them lived right around in there. They are all working in the church, in the temple [and] they are all musically inclined. The youngest sister's husband bought her a piano for her birthday, or for Christmas, I don't remember which, [and] she plays. She went ahead then and took lessons. She plays the piano and sings.

I moved out on the old Strip and we never had anything. I never advanced one bit from the time I married. When we were in [Las] Vegas, we [went] places because we went out on the streets [and] sang, [gave] talks and did a lot of missionary work. Then it was a smaller place. They built a little old church when Omer [was] there. They didn't have a bishop, but they had, what do you call them? Anyway, Marion Earl was at the head of it.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

HR: Oh?

RB: Some other denomination has it now. When they moved it from [the First Ward], they moved it on out to Henderson [Nevada]. No, they moved it out to Boulder City [Nevada]. Emer [and his family] went to it when they lived in Boulder [City].

HR: Oh?

RB: Now they have moved down to North Las Vegas [Nevada].

HR: They have moved that building around and around, haven't they? [Laughter]

RB: We have really some memories of [it]. [Laughter] They built a basement in it to give us a little more room.

HR: Yes.

RB: These are the experiences that I always [have] lived [for] away from the rest of my family. [I] never was around them only except to go for a visit for maybe a week, and then back again.

HR: You could sure sing, anyway. I remember you singing, beautifully.

RB: I did, but it didn't do me much good, Helen. If I had have been, like I said so many times, maybe I could have still been singing. If I would have had a piano and we would have been able to [to take lessons]. I took instrumental and vocal [lessons] both when I was home. I worked and took lessons. After I married and we moved out on the Strip there, we were clear away from music where we could get to a piano and get places.

HR: Yes.

RB: I never went ahead, I just went backwards, instead of forward, is all [that] I can tell you. [Laughter] We were out there on the Strip and I didn't know a soul out there. We lived so far away from your mother and them. Aunt "Retty" [Doretta (Iverson) Bundy] was more like a mother to me than anybody. I could always go to her with all of my little problems. When I would go to her with mine, I found out that she had —.

HR: Just as many, too! [Laughter]

RB: Right! That is the way it goes. I don't know about all of these little things here in life, they come and go.

HR: Well, that's life. I guess we have these kinds of difficulties and trials to make us grow. Our minds develop; [we] overcome our problems. Then we have more compassion [for] somebody else [who] is maybe more unfortunate that we are.

RB: You can always find them.

HR: Yes, you can.

RB: Have you ever listened to this *Nitecaps* program that comes on? It is really good. It comes on at twelve o'clock. These people can't talk about religion or politics, just more or less just [about] their own self. You get tired of it and some nights you just don't care for it. He is on from twelve o'clock until five in the morning

on KSL, if you have a radio that you can turn on and are up at that time of night. I've been listening to them quite a bit. If you want to hear stories about people, they can call in. The fellow's name is Herb [Jepko] and then Rick. Herb and Rick are the main [fellows] that are on and a lot of these people call in so many times. They know they can only talk five minutes.

[Herb Jepko *Nitecaps* was an open-mic radio call-in show which ran on KSL Radio in Salt Lake City for many years in the 1960s and 1970s.]

HR: Only five minutes?

RB: Yes, and then the little bell comes on and they have to quit. These people are telling [their stories]. I think some of those women [who] have played the organ beautifully are as blind as they can be, but they are as cheerful and happy as they can be. When I go to bed at night, I can't sleep lots of times. I just lay there and so I turn this on, and listen to it because I don't like to turn the light on because Nora's there and it bothers her. I can turn this on. Lots of times there are some [very] good talks that come on. It is people calling in from all over and everywhere. You get Canada, Arkansas, Oklahoma, California, Nevada, Texas and all around the whole country. He tells you what lines are open [inaudible]. Then they will come right in on the program. They tell you conditions, their health, and some of them have such nice poems that they will [recite]. Others sing songs, and take up the five minutes just telling [about] their health and singing a song. They are all elderly people, the big majority of them. Sometimes there are professors and school teachers. They have just one night where it is people [who] have never called in before and lots of times its teenagers —

HR: Oh?

RB: — [who] will call in. Some of these boys are working in service stations, working their way through school and they will call in. They are kind of dead like and they will call in on that program and talk to this [fellow]. I think it's really interesting. I quite enjoy listening to it for a while and I can go to sleep. Seems like it kind of —.

HR: Soothes you!

RB: Yes, it does something [for] you.

HR: You hear other people's problems and you kind of forget your own.

RB: I'll say. You figure you haven't got any sometimes. [Laughter] [Inaudible]

HR: You look at it and know you are really blessed.

RB: So many of them are women [who] are left alone and have been left alone. Some of them have their daughters with them. Some of them have been in hospitals and they [were] just [discharged] and [to] talk to somebody they can comfort their [inaudible]. They can make them feel better anyway, and cheer them up a little bit with answering their questions. [Inaudible] I can listen to that. Some nights I don't care for it and some nights I can go to sleep and never think about it and never turn it on, but as night comes along and I can't sleep very good, I turn it on and listen to other people's little sad stories. [Laughter]

HR: Yes. [Laughter]

RB: You will have to turn it on some night if you are up and can't sleep. Maybe you don't find many of those nights, though.

HR: Oh, I do, but I haven't thought about getting the radio. Sometimes, especially in the summertime, when it is warm, I will turn on the light and read. But in the wintertime, it is too cold to [put] your arms out and read.

RB: I know it, it really is. Omer use to have a little [inaudible]. He had that room right to the side of ours, that small room right there. He always wanted to be off by himself, because he didn't want the [children] coming in at night and disturbing him.

[END OF RECORDING TWO. END OF INTERVIEW.]