

Interview with
MIRIAM ADELIA (COX) WILSON RIDING

December 3, 1968

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
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MIRIAM ADELIA (COX) WILSON RIDING

Miriam Adelia (Cox) Wilson Riding was interviewed on December 3, 1968 at the Cooper Rest Haven in St. George, Washington County, Utah by Fielding H. Harris, a representative of Voices of Remembrance Foundation. She related her personal history of living in various parts of Utah and Mexico.

FH: Would you please give your full name?

MR: [My name is] Miriam Adelia (Cox) Wilson Riding and [I am] affectionately known as "Aunt Bea."

FH: [What is] your birth date?

MR: I was born August 18, 1878 in Fairview, Sanpete County, Utah.

FH: What was your father's name?

MR: My father was Almer B. [Bingley] Cox

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

MR: My mother was Sarah Ellen (Jones) Cox.

FH: What do you remember from your early childhood?

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MR: When I was a tiny little girl there was a barrel of water by the side of the house and a bee was in the barrel. I put my hand under the bee and lifted him out. He flushed his wings, stung me and flew away. I was plum discouraged! I thought I had done him a good turn. [Laughter]

FH: He paid you back in the wrong way.

MR: He sure did. I had a little lamb and it fed in the yard. There was a mare feeding with it and the lamb kept trying to get in the shade of the mare. She grabbed it in her teeth and shook it and threw it. I saw that and it was dead. My [younger] brother [Victor Cox] and I decided to bury it. We went out by the ditch and he dug a hole — as much as he could. We put the lamb in and covered it up, but the wool was still sticking out. We went [out] the next morning to see if it was alright and [the lamb] was all gone. We decided it had gone to heaven.

There was a patch of squash in bloom and the bees were so thick in it. My brothers [Marlin and Philemon Cox] were tying the bees up in the blossoms. I was going around untying them and I [was] stung again. I decided bees were not very much good for children.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

MR: My mother was milking the cows at night. I always had my little cup to get me a drink of milk when they started milking. She handed me a cup of strippings to hold and I drank it. She wanted the cup. I was scared so I ran and tried to jump across the ditch and I fell in all over! [Laughter]

FH: [Laughter] You got the worse of that deal! Where were you when you started school?

MR: I was living in Fairview. I remember that first winter the snow [was] quite deep. My older brother [Almer Cox] always went to school on a horse because he was a cripple. He started the horse loping. It frightened me and I cried. He put me down in the snow and I had to walk seven blocks to school. He would turn the horse loose [to] go home. [Later], father would bring [the horse back] to school for him to ride back [home].

FH: How much [education] were you able to get?

MR: Our school didn't start until after the crops were [planted] in the fall. Then [school] was out as soon as work [could begin] in the fields in the spring. I [went] as far as the fourth reader. They didn't have grades in those days. I had three different teachers that I knew. One of them was my aunt [inaudible].

FH: Would you name some of the [other] teachers?

MR: One was Miss Marsh, one was [Elvira] Euphrasia [(Cox)] Day and one was Anna Christensen.

FH: Did you feel they were good teachers?

MR: I liked every one of them.

FH: Did you enjoy school?

MR: Yes. I was lazy in school [and] didn't do much. [Laughter] I would rather look out the windows and see what was going on outside.

FH: How old were you when you finished the fourth reader?

MR: I never [finished] it because I went to school a little while in Mexico to other teachers. Then [I went to school] a little while in another town in Mexico. I didn't get all the way through.

FH: Did you move to Mexico when you were a [young] girl?

MR: I was about twelve [years old] when father moved to Mexico. After mother died, [March 19, 1889] father started having rheumatism. He decided to go to a warm country where he [could] get rid of the rheumatism [so] he moved his family to Old Mexico.

[The gravestone for Sarah Ellen (Jones) Cox gives the death date as March 17, 1889, but other family records give the March 19, 1889 date. Unsure of actual date.]

FH: How old were you when your mother died?

MR: [I was] ten [years old].

FH: Did you have some older sisters?

MR: No.

FH: Did you have the responsibility of the household?

MR: Before we moved to Mexico we had hired girls. My aunt Euphrasia came and stayed one year with us. Mother left a tiny baby [Rulon Cox] when she died and aunt Euphrasia came to take care of the baby. She had a baby of her own and she nursed them both.

FH: Was this quite common in that day?

MR: Yes.

FH: When [a] mother died, another mother would usually take the baby.

MR: Yes, when they could. There were about six or seven women [who] died that same year that my mother did of puerperal fever. Childbed fever they called it. [It was an] infection carried from one to the other [by] the doctors and nurses. They didn't know anything about antiseptics and sterilization [at that time].

FH: How many children did your parents have?

MR: My mother had eleven children. After father married again, he had two more children.

FH: So there were thirteen [children] altogether.

MR: Father was married before he married mother. His first [Martha Jane (Black) Cox] wife left him. She had a pair of twins [Elmer and Almer Cox]. He was working on the Muddy [River at St. Thomas, Nevada]. The twins were born in Beaver [Beaver County, Utah]. When they [brought] him word, he went as quickly as he could, but one baby [Almer] died before he got there.

FH: What happened to the other one?

MR: He grew up to be a man. I never saw him. His mother married another man [George Gale]. He was married, but he never had any family.

FH: Where in Mexico did [your family] go?

MR: They went to Colonia Dublan, Chihuahua, Mexico. He moved everything we had down, the potatoes and flour and [our possessions]. He about lost it all because he moved so late in the fall. It was just before Christmas when the train [arrived] in Nevada. It was so cold the trains couldn't go in the snow and they had to stop for forty-eight hours. That gave the potatoes a chance to freeze. They all froze and father had to pay the company for extra weight. The flour he took down, which he raised from his own crop; he had to turn that over to pay for the extra loading that we had on the car.

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FH: Did you have an accident when you were a [young] girl?

MR: I was walking on the railing atop a barbed wire fence. The barbed wire in those days had long barbs. As I walked, my cousin called me a tomboy and told me to get down. He threatened me and I lost my balance and fell. I was cut pretty bad on one leg. Mother had gone to Ephraim [Sanpete County, Utah] to study obstetrics under a doctor. She had been gone a couple of weeks and there was a hired girl there. She told me it served me right. My cousin took me up to the ditch, washed the sores and took care of it the best she could. There was never anything done to them. They healed up themselves. Nasty, bad sores they were for a long, long time.

FH: Did they leave bad scars?

MR: Yes, but they were all out of sight.

FH: After your mother died, [did] you go to work for someone else? [Was this when] you were eleven [years old]?

MR: I was going to school from grandma's [Elvira Pamela (Mills) Cox] [house]. This man came and wanted me to work for his wife. She was in bed. She wasn't confined, but she had some kind of stomach trouble and stayed in bed all the time.

I did all of the housework. She told me what to do and how to do it, but I didn't get the floors mopped very [well], the one floor. I made a little girl a dress on the sewing machine with the mother showing me how. I washed the dishes and milked the cow. They paid me \$.50 a week and didn't pay me \$2.50 for eleven weeks I worked there.

FH: Did they just owe it to you?

MR: Yes. They still owe it to me. [Laughter]

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: Did another lady come and [hire] you from that job?

MR: Yes. She took me out to a kind of a ranch. She wanted me to be with her daughter who had to watch sheep and cows to keep them from getting into the fields. [When] we were out in the hills we ran onto a skunk and killed her. The folks in the house were having a quilting [laughter] when we went there. They weren't very happy about it.

FH: I don't imagine you were either. [Laughter]

MR: No. [Laughter] We went back the next day to where she was and there were five baby skunks playing around her body. We killed all of those. We were mean [children]! We had to watch to keep the cattle and sheep from getting into the fields and damaging the crops.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: Tell about your [The] Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints] activities.

MR: I always went to Sunday school and to Primary until I was fourteen [years old]. When I was fourteen I could join the young ladies Mutual Improvement Association. Then, they didn't join when girls were twelve [years old]. I stayed in Primary until I was fourteen. I enjoyed going to Sunday school and to Primary. I enjoyed the Mutual [inaudible]. Once a month we would have Mutual with the boys. They had [their own] their Mutual. Ours was just girls.

FH: Your lessons were different.

MR: I did love the ladies, the presidents of the organizations. I know one was Sister Young. Her father was the first man the prophet —

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

FH: Was she your Primary teacher?

MR: And also my school teacher. I loved her.

FH: What was her name?

MR: She was Libby (Knight) Young. The first miracle in the church was performed on her father.

FH: Would you tell what you know about that?

MR: It is what she told me. The prophet [Joseph Smith] had asked him [Newell Knight] to offer a prayer and he had refused. The devil took hold of him and he was in a bad way. The prophet rebuked the evil spirit.

[Reference *The Joseph Knight Family*, by Larry Porter in October 1978 *Ensign*, page 39.]

FH: Did the devil lift him right off the floor?

MR: Took him up to the ceiling, back down to the ground and twisted him all up.

FH: The prophet rebuked Satan and he came right out of it. Was [she] your Sunday school teacher?

MR: She was my Primary teacher and a school teacher also.

FH: What do you remember about your father?

MR: He was a tall man and very stern. He had everything in order, what he made and what he did. He was a beautiful writer. I couldn't find a word that he couldn't spell when I was growing up — unless I [found] geography words. I couldn't find one [word] that he couldn't spell in the English language. He was wonderful in writing and spelling. But he was [very] stern.

FH: Was he a hard worker?

MR: Yes, a very hard worker. [He was] up at four o'clock in the morning in the summertime. He always had all the children, every child in the house, awake when he got up. He wanted his children to be early risers.

FH: Did you approve of that?

MR: I didn't approve of it! [Laughter] I was in a trundle bed when I was so [young]. I slept by the fireplace and just hated [getting up so early]. I was so sleepy. [Laughter]

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FH: Was your dad as honest as the day is long?

MR: Yes. He would do a good turn for his neighbor whenever he could. He was very faithful attending [to] his church duties.

FH: Was he a polygamist?

MR: No.

FH: Did he go to Mexico for another reason?

MR: He went to Mexico for warmer country because he had rheumatism. He wanted to get rid of that. He thought [that] if he [lived] in a good, warm country he would. He did to some extent.

FH: Was [his health] better down there?

MR: Yes, he was better. He raised good crops [and] was a wonderful farmer.

FH: Tell about your mother.

MR: She was the most wonderful woman I ever knew. I loved my mother. She was so good to us. Once every week, after I [was] about eight years old, father would give us a little dance in the home if we would behave ourselves. He played the violin and called the dances. He never allowed us to dance round dances, only the square dances and quadrilles. We enjoyed those evening events [on] Friday evenings. He asked the bishop [for] permission and it was alright.

FH: Did he play an instrument?

MR: He played a violin.

FH: Was he the one [who] played the music for you?

MR: Yes, he played the violin and called the dances.

FH: Was this just your own family?

MR: He allowed us to invite in children [who] weren't rude or noisy. He wouldn't let us have any of those kinds, but mostly it was just our own family. There were enough of us because Uncle "Orv's" [Orville Mills Cox] family had five children and mother had seven [children] when the last baby was born. Of course, the baby wasn't big enough to dance.

FH: Did your mother lose some of her children?

MR: Yes. Four of [her] children died in babyhood.

FH: Could you name your brothers and sisters?

MR: Yes. Almina [Cox] was born in [Overton] Nevada. Then Almer [Benjamin], Marlin, Philemon [Cox] and myself. Ora Loretta and Sylvester, those two died. Then Victor [Jones], Sarah [Ellen], Lester, [who] died and Rulon [Cox]. Almina died when she was a tiny baby and Almer was crippled. He was the oldest one.

FH: Was your family quite active in the church?

MR: They did everything they were asked to do. [At that time] the children didn't work in the church as much as they do now. I remember the old men used to take care of the Sacrament [Meetings].

FH: Did they attend [church activities] and have been active throughout their lives?

MR: Yes.

FH: Was there a faith-promoting experience that happened to your brother [Marlin]?

MR: My second brother had a pocket knife that belonged to him and his other brother. It was his turn to have it this day and he was swinging it around by the string that was tied to it. It slipped out of his hand. He knew he would get a whipping if he didn't find that. He hunted wherever he could hunt. He couldn't [find it]. He decided to pray and knelt down and asked the Lord to help him to find the old toad-stabber. That is what he called the knife. When he opened his eyes there it was right in front of him. Nobody could have persuaded him that Heavenly Father didn't put it there Himself. He knew it wasn't there when he shut his eyes and started to pray.

FH: Did it have a tremendous effect on all of you [who] knew about it?

MR: Yes.

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

MR: When we all moved together, Uncle "Orv" made three swings out on the sidewalk. I used to get [in] the swing, climb the fence, slip it over my back, jump off and swing that way quite high. [Laughter] Then he made the whirligigs and the teeter-totters. There was always a large group of children around our place because [we had] those three swings.

FH: You had all kinds of company. Did you have sports activities? Did you play games?

MR: [We did that] only in school. I used to play baseball in the school yard. I was the best catcher. [Laughter]

FH: Did you enjoy music when you were growing up?

MR: I loved music. I loved to hear father and mother sing. They sang together a lot. In the evenings they did quite a lot of singing. That was in the earlier days. After they had such a big family, it wasn't so easy for them. You see, father's brother [Orville Mills Cox was married to] mother's sister [Maud Rosanna Jones]. Mother's sister died and left five children. Father and mother took those children and their father in our home. It made a big family of us, eleven children and then mother had one more. She had two [more children]. The first one [Lester Cox] died with whooping cough. She had another [child, Rulon Cox] and [then] [mother] died.

FH: Did she [your mother] die at childbirth?

MR: Yes.

FH: Did [her death] leave a pretty big job [for] the rest of the family?

MR: Yes, it sure did.

FH: Did you get along pretty well?

MR: Yes. We all loved each other. We were friendly together. We surely missed the other family when we went to Mexico. After mother died, Uncle "Orv" took his family and moved [by] himself. He had a daughter [Ida Lozette Cox] older than I was [who] was a good housekeeper.

FH: Did that take [some of] your help away when she left?

MR: Yes.

FH: Have you enjoyed reading in your life?

MR: I have read everything I could get a hold of — I love to read. The first [book I read], I found an old novel. It wasn't very good. It thrilled me to read it. We didn't have much reading material. Father and mother had the *Juvenile*. We kept the *Juvenile* in our home. I read [it] a lot.

FH: That is the forerunner of the *Juvenile Instructor*.

MR: Yes.

FH: What kinds of reading material have you enjoyed the most?

MR: I enjoy the church reading material, what we have in the church: the *Relief Society [Magazine]*, the *Era* and the missionary tracts the church puts out. I spend lots of time now reading the *Doctrine and Covenants Commentary*. I love it.

FH: How did you meet your husband? Where did you settle down?

MR: I was in school one afternoon and our bishop came to the schoolhouse and asked if I could come out. The teacher said I could so I went out. He told me about a good man [and] he thought I ought to pay attention to him. He gave me a lot of good words, good information at that time. So the children wouldn't ask me what he talked about — he had some mowing machine knives for my father to put on his mowing machine. I never had seen him. He lived in Colonia Diaz [Chihuahua, Mexico]. He came to our place and asked father's permission and visited. He was very kind, very nice, a good honorable man. Father told him that I was the only housekeeper he had. I was seventeen [years old] then, or just about, [and] he couldn't spare me.

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

MR: So [David Johnson] Wilson knew of a widow [and] he thought it would be good for her and father to meet. Father said if she would come and stay for a couple of weeks and see about it, he would pay her for working for us for two weeks. Brother Wilson brought this widow to our home. After two weeks was [over], father sent me to town with the wagon to get the bishop. The bishop came over, this lady made a cake and they were married.

FH: What was her name?

MR: Belinda [Marden] (Kendrick) Rowley. Kendrick was her maiden name. She was from England.

FH: Was she a widow?

MR: She was a widow and had two children. [Her] little girl had the same name I did. Father sent me and Victor with her back to Colonia Diaz to get her things. She was a plural wife and her husband had a big family. They pestered us to pieces. They even backed a horse into the room. Finally, she went after Brother Wilson. He came and strung the boys up, fixed up the team, helped load her things up, took me down to his place and sent another man with her and Victor to take her home to Diaz. He was already going to Dublan. I stayed at his home and went to school the rest of that winter. That [happened] late in the fall.

The next summer, the church sent President Young's son, Brigham Young Jr., down to Arizona to a conference. The church sent us word that if we would pay his way on down to Mexico he would perform a ceremony and marry us. But we had to meet him at Deming, New Mexico. The train came that far. There was

another couple [who] wanted to be married. The men paid [Apostle] Young's way from Mesa, Arizona down to Deming, New Mexico. One of the men met him there and came on to Mexico to perform the [ceremony]. We went to meet them and were married on the railroad track by President Young. It was built up for a railroad track. One of the men took him back to the train that night. That is the way we were married.

[David Johnson and Miriam Adelia (Cox) Wilson were married July 1, 1895 in Colonia Diaz, Chihuahua, Mexico.]

The people were allowed to be married in Mexico, because the law of the land didn't oppose plural marriage. However, the law didn't respect two women. A man was honored, all of his children were honored, but his first wife was the wife and the others were old maids, but they were in his family.

FH: If you could retrace your steps, do you think you would change much of your life?

MR: No.

FH: Where did you and your first husband go to live when you were married?

MR: I lived with his daughter [Pearl Melissa (Wilson) Brown]. She was widowed and just a block from his other family. I lived with his daughter because she was ill and needed somebody to take care of her. I lived at her place and went on to school that winter. My first baby was born in November 1896.

FH: What was that child's name?

MR: [Her name was] Stella [Wilson]. I thought she was the cutest baby [there] ever was. She had long, dark hair that curled so beautifully, about an inch long. It was so thick. She was a good baby.

After she was born, we moved from Colonia Diaz to Oaxaca [Mexico]. It took us eleven days to make that trip. It was a long, tiresome journey. After we [came] to the mountains, we had to go through the most awful roads I have ever seen. They were so steep, high and twisty. We camped on top of a mountain, working down in the twist where we camped at night. We could have thrown a rock to where we camped the night before. It was so hard to get over. The ground was so steep. Mexicans thought a road was good if a burro could walk over it. It was so steep I couldn't stay on the wagon. I got off and was walking down the hill. It was so steep my feet slipped from under me and I sat down. Some of the folks that went down that mountain had to tie a tree to the back of their wagon to hold it back. Our men just held back on it.

My husband had been [very] sick with mastoid trouble from July until after the baby was born in, I think, January. He wanted to move to a better climate than

Diaz and that is why we moved over to Oaxaca. It was a beautiful climate, a nice place. When we got down into the bottom of that canyon, the weather was so warm. It was the first of March and there was a peach tree in bloom. Somebody had dropped a pit there [and it] had grown up into a tree. The canyon was so narrow and tall that you had to look right straight up to see a bit of sky. The trees had grown so tall to reach the sunshine. For twelve miles we went down that canyon road. We crossed the little river forty-two times in twelve miles. It was just a little stream. It was clear. The cattle that were there were fat. It was so shady and cool and they would go out on the hills to find food. There was no food around the water, but they were fat as they could be.

When we went out of the Pulpit Canyon, we went out right by a huge rock that was called Pulpit. So the canyon is named Pulpit Canyon. There was one mountain that was so steep and high. It was such a gravelly road [of] square gravel. They had to make the horses trot to go up the hill, to get the wagon up. It would roll right down if they didn't keep them trotting.

FH: This country had quite rich soil.

MR: [There were] things we had never seen before. After we [came] out of the canyon there was one tree that was so big around, a forty-foot rope reached around the bottom of the bole of the tree. It wasn't a very high tree, but [had] a [very] thick branch. [It] was only the one that we saw that was that large. It was in March when we [came] down into Oaxaca. It was so warm and nice we all went in the river to swim.

FH: How long did you live there?

MR: I was there and back for two winters. My husband freighted from Oaxaca to Dublan. I went to Dublan for the winter and then he would freight from Oaxaca. [He] brought ore from the mountain and took [back] things that the people needed. So he would get paid both ways. By having me living in Dublan, he could afford to wait [long] enough for a load to go back. For two winters I went to Dublan and then back to Oaxaca for the summer. We had to raise gardens. My husband built a brick kiln. He built one of the homes while we lived in Oaxaca. We had to water our gardens at night. The sun was so hot it would dry the water out before it reached the garden. They had the water in [a] reservoir so they didn't turn the water loose until after the sun was down. Everybody watered their gardens in the night. The water would reach the gardens in the night and it wouldn't in the daytime.

FH: Did [the water] evaporate too fast [to] go into the ground?

MR: Yes, it would.

FH: Were you able to raise some good crops?

MR: Yes. It was wonderful country to grow things. Our places were all covered with brush and we had to clear the brush off. One winter I went out to Naco [Mexico], David's friends [were] from Naco, and stayed there to earn money. It was nice to come back home. Then the Morales [Mexico] country was open. He had a grist mill that he wanted to put up. He couldn't [find] a place in Oaxaca where he could put the grist mill. This new country opened up and the church advised him to go down there. So we moved down there. My second baby was born in Dublan. My third [child was born] in Morales.

FH: What was the name of the second one?

MR: He was David Iddo [Wilson]. He lived until he was twenty-two years old and then he died. [David Iddo Wilson was born December 19, 1898 and died at age twenty-three on February 7, 1922.]

FH: How long did [your] first one live?

MR: She [Stella] is alive now.

FH: Where is she now?

MR: [She lives] in Woods Cross [Davis County] Utah. She married C. L. [Charles Lorenzo] Pettit and they have raised a family.

FH: When [did your] second [child] die?

MR: He died when he was twenty-four years old. We had moved up to Utah before he died. We took him to the temple and, three days after he went through the temple, he died in St. George.

FH: What about [your] third [child]?

MR: [Her name was] Mary Julia [Wilson]. All of my babies had beautiful heads of hair. Mary's was the best of all. She had the most hair and the longest. She grew up and married a man [Bert Glenn Lund] and had seven children. He [was] asphyxiated in the Deer Trail Mine. She raised her children [and] never married any more. She still lives in Marysville [Piute County, Utah]. She met him in Marysville. She went down to work for someone down there and met her boyfriend. They were married down there.

FH: What about the next child?

MR: The next was [Adelia] Mirl [Wilson]. She was never very well. She is still living. She is in Hurricane [Washington County, Utah]. She raised a family of four children. She married first [Richard] "Dick" [Wilding] Pettit. He just couldn't provide for her, it seemed like. [After they divorced] she married —

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MR: — [Fred] Bert Wetzel. They had three children. Then they were separated [and divorced]. Then she married Leslie Stratton. He is a blind man [and] they live in Hurricane now. She was the only one of my girls [who] graduated from high school.

FH: What was the next [child's] name?

MR: [The next child was] Orville Cox [Wilson].

I didn't tell you about [David] Iddo's name. Months before he was born, his father said he didn't believe anybody had ever honored the Prophet Iddo and he would like to name a child after him. When Iddo was born, I wrote to my grandmother for a name. I had heard my grandmother cry and say father had never allowed her to name one of his children. She was so thrilled. She was happy about it, but the name didn't come. Iddo [became] very, very sick. I was sick. One of the neighbors said, "We better have him named or he will go in a nameless grave. When your grandmother sends the name, you can change it." So I said to David, "Let's name him David Iddo." He said, "When did you think of [that]?" I said, "About four o'clock this morning." He said, "So did I and wrote it in the [*Holy Bible*] in two places." He was named, blessed and he got well. I decided that was the name the Lord wanted him to have and we didn't change it. When grandmother sent another name we gave it to another boy, Orville Cox. That was my grandmother's husband's name. Orville was our fifth child. He married [and] they had four children.

FH: Who did he marry?

MR: He married Lenora [Barber] Jarram. She was afflicted and never got over it. She gave her permission to Orville to be divorced and to marry another woman. He took care of her for as long as she lived. He paid for her keep and left her in the home he had built.

FH: Was she not able to do anything?

MR: She couldn't do very much. I guess she could do some things. She had a sort of a creeping paralysis like my stepson, [Franklin] Dee [Riding], had. He went on a [LDS] mission and he came back with [a] creeping paralysis [on] his right side. [He] was paralyzed when he [came] home. He filled the mission. The last six months they kept him working on a church house and didn't let him go out. They could see there was something wrong with him.

FH: Where did he fill [his] mission?

MR: [His mission was] in the Southern States.

FH: Did Orville marry another wife?

MR: Yes.

FH: What was her name?

MR: He married Neta [Elaine] (Nowlin) [Hull]. She had a family of nine children. He raised those children. They didn't have any [children].

FH: What about his four [other children]? Did he keep those with him?

MR: No. They lived with their grandmother until they married and finally she [their mother] died. His oldest boy teaches college in Arizona.

FH: Where are they [Orville and Neta] living now?

MR: [They live] in Murray [Salt Lake County, Utah]. Their address is 4491 Gordon Lane.

FH: Who is the next child?

MR: [Our next child was] George [Fairchild Wilson].

FH: George Wilson?

MR: Yes.

FH: Where does he live and what has happened to him?

MR: He is now living at Glen Canyon [Page, Arizona] running a garage. He will be there a year [doing] that. He has a home in Tropic [Garfield County, Utah with] a garden and fruit trees. I went to live with him because I couldn't live alone any longer. He had a good job at that time. He was on the road [working] in political affairs. They changed and he lost his job for that reason — the [job] he had had for twelve years. It was hard for him to get a job anywhere near home. Finally, I just decided I better come here because they wanted so badly to work somewhere together. Their children are all married. There is one son [who] is still living [at home who] is in college. He is planning to teach in the college.

FH: What college is he [at]?

MR: [He is at] Brigham Young [University, Provo, Utah County, Utah]. He is planning to marry sometime soon.

FH: Who came after George?

MR: I think [that would be] Marcia [Ellen Wilson]. She is living in Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah]. Her husband [Walter Allen Marshall] died a couple of years ago. She has four children. She doesn't have very good health, but she is living in a home. They had to take her husband. He was a veteran of World War I and was [very] sick. They had to take him up there and she moved up there. They were living in Marysvale. She has been there about ten or twelve years, I guess. Her sons have a business there and she takes care of the telephones for three businesses there. She has three telephones in her room and she takes care of their business.

FH: That [must] keep her pretty busy.

MR: Yes, it does. Sometimes when I am up there she answers one telephone and another. She is very careful about her records [that] she keeps.

FH: After Marcia who comes?

MR: Then [there is] Joseph [Hyrum Wilson]. Joseph married a girl and went through the temple with her. They [moved] to California.

FH: What is her name?

MR: I don't like to tell you. His wife [became] infatuated of another fellow who had been through the temple. She married him. I guess they divorced before that. She married him and he [Joseph] married the wife [who] was left. He brought her up here to Utah and was taking good care of her. [He] let her go down to California to see her folks and sent her money to come back with, [but] she didn't come. Then she sent for more money and he wouldn't send her any more. So they were divorced.

FH: He had bad luck.

MR: It was bad luck all the way around. He and the wife he married had three children or was it four [children]. Anyway, his oldest daughter had a set of identical triplets, but one didn't live. The others are about ten years old now. He has a wife in Salt Lake [City] and has a nice home now. He is [very] good to me. They all are very good to me.

FH: They should be.

MR: Their father [David Johnson Wilson] died on September 17, 1912.

FH: Is Joseph the youngest one?

MR: He is the youngest Wilson [child].

FH: Tell about your married life with your first husband.

MR: I guess about the worst thing that happened was the flood. He had a grist mill. He moved it to Morales and was putting it up there. He [put] up enough so that he could grind grain and cornmeal. He was working to get it all up so he could make fine flour. Lots of Mexicans came there to get [their] grinding done. Before this, he had bees. He was a beekeeper and Morales was a wonderful country for bees. We didn't have any buildings or anything. We just had the shade of the trees to work under. One fall we had ninety-five-gallon cans full of honey sitting under the trees. The mesquite trees were thick there — many acres of them and catclaw [bushes] and they just produced lots of honey. A fellow [who] came from Utah brought [bees with] foulbrood [bacterial disease] down and put his bees right by ours.

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

MR: Our [bees] was out of town. He couldn't take [his bees] into town or they didn't want him to [so] he set them by ours. My husband went past there one day and discovered [the bees] had this disease. He went to town and told him, "If you burn them up I will give you a starter." "I can cure that," he said, but he didn't and he didn't move them away. He just let them stay there and our bees got [the disease]. We lost every bee we had.

Then this big flood came. Those were two things in Morales that were quite sad. I guess for two weeks we never saw the sun. It just rained and rained in the fall just as the fruit crops were ripening. The people in Morales had only been there long enough to get trees planted. This was about the first fruit [crop] and they were all so hungry for fruit. It rained and rained and rained and rained. The Bavispe River kept coming up and coming up and coming up. Between our house and town there was a place when the river was [very] high. There was a wash around it and [it made] an island. Quite a [number] of trees grew on it. [They were] big, great huge trees. The flood came up to there and dashed against the first tree and dashed against it. Finally, a great big tree tipped over and went with the flood. The flood kept rising and rising until all the trees on that island were washed away.

FH: Was this an unusual [event]?

MR: It was a terrible unusual [event]. The people had tents that they had brought down and had them still set up. [There was] so much rain that spots of mold came all over the tents. We could see cattle and one thing and another floating down, sometimes wire. Our neighbor across the river had built a house at the foot of the hill. The wives didn't want to carry water up the hill so they built there. You could see the water coming up to their house and they were running. Everybody in the house, children and all, going up the hill and carrying material [from] their house. [It was a] big flood and huge trees [were] going by and great waves as big

as houses. It kept getting bigger and bigger. [There was a] crowd around our place. One man said, "She [the river] has risen three feet in the last hour."

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MR: All the men around would stick little pegs in the edge of the water to see [the depth]. It wouldn't be only a little while until the water rose above them. The house across the river where they left it, we could see the water get up to the windows, up to the top of the windows and finally, the roof floated away. The water was just nearly touching an edge of our house. I said to my husband, "We will have to get the teams loaded and go up to the hills." He said, "'Lassie", it would take more than there is there now to raise the water another foot and it would take another foot to do us any damage." He took a shovel and dug a little levee by one corner where the water was closest to [the house] and threw the dirt up against the side of the house. We were just watching it and so anxious about everything. About eleven o'clock somebody yelled, "She [the river] is lowering." My, how glad we were! We couldn't have gone to bed [with] all of that destruction going on.

My husband had planted quite a row of trees in our field with a black widow [blade]. [It was] in a wash that went down there. He said, "They make such good rigid systems. Floods won't wash them away. They will cause [the] wash that is in the field to fill up." The water was near the top of those trees and they must have been fifty-feet high. The next morning when we [woke] up, the river was a half mile from our house. The water was a mile wide. When it [went] down there were four or five big piles of debris in the riverbed. My husband tried to get the men to get it in to the mill and grind it up, but [it was] full of great big trees. Every tree in that river was those that my husband had planted. They were washed away, every tree that we could see from our place. Of course, our land was ruined, [but] our house wasn't.

Brother Fenn wasn't the only one. Brother Huish had a house down. The woman sat in her house. The children had all gone. They were all excited about the river. There was a Fenn family too down in the river. This woman sat there and did an ironing and baked bread. Pretty soon he thought about her. He was up [in] town. The town was all excited. He thought he better go get his wife. When he went down he had to go across the water to come get into the wagon box. So they just [put] her in and shut the door. The ironing and the bread and all were there in the house, but it all went down the river.

Quite a lot of people had moved there and had planted fruit trees when they first went down. [The trees] were just ready to bear. They planted them on low land because it was easy to get water to [the trees]. Another stream came into the river right in that corner and those trees were all washed away, every one of them.

We thought about the people at Oaxaca and wondered about them. They lived about twenty miles up the river. We found out the flood had bent the river off below their town. There was a narrow canyon that went through [there]. Those great big trees and the river rose. That morning it had quit raining. All the men but one had gone out to see about their cattle that were out in the hills. Their women and children were left alone. There were twenty-eight homes in the [town]. Some [were] on high ground. The water would come up to [a house] and they would jump out and take what they could carry and go up to the meetinghouse.

The water was coming so fast. They finally got all up to the meetinghouse; [it] was the only place where the water didn't come to. There were nine houses left standing. The water had gone up to different levels on different [houses]. One [house] where they had an upstairs, the upstairs window was open and a little cottonwood tree floated into the upstairs window.

There was one woman whose youngest son had married a woman and, when her first baby was born, she died. The grandmother had the baby and was taking care of it. She had a brand new brick home [built] and was well-supplied with things. She wouldn't leave. She said, "I know the Lord won't take my house." She had about \$100.00 worth of homemade soap. She had a lot of sheep and something [sickened] them and they died. She had made soap [from] all the fat. It was drying around her house. Finally, the Relief Society women went down and took her out. When they [took] her up to the meetinghouse, somebody thought about the baby. There was a woman there, a young woman [who] had two children. She got on a horse and went to get the baby. She said she was so glad the posts stuck up along the fences so she could see where the road went to get to the house. When she [came] to the house, the cradle was floating with the baby in it, like Moses in the bulrushes. She [brought] it out and they got up there alright.

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MR: Some of the houses where the water went in had their stoves covered. They just rusted out before people could get to them. Their clothes, rugs and everything were gone. I believe the big flood and our bees going was the worst.

FH: It was a disaster.

MR: Yes, both of them were disasters.

FH: Did you try to rebuild there?

MR: No. We moved across the river where there was a chance for him to get his mill out of the bottom of the river and put it up. He had to make a ditch. Other men [who] belonged over there had land. Some of them had teams and [equipment] and went off to the mines to work. [They] told David to make this dam. They said, "We will pay you for our part." He had a blacksmith just under the edge of a

tree. He mended scrapers and anything they were using. He hired some Mexicans and paid them [with] beef for working on the ditch. He hired a few Mexicans and they worked there faithfully. The men went off with their teams and earned money. When they came back they said, "You have made this ditch cost too much." They held a meeting and said, "You must resell what you have at a reduced price, forty percent." They had a grist mill and they didn't want him to have one. We had to get out of that place.

One of our babies was born over there across the river. Then we moved to another place up north of Morales. We were living there pretty well when I had a chance to go to the temple. I [received] some money from my mother's property. When I was up there, my husband's brother [George Hyrum Wilson] sent money for him to come to the temple the next fall conference. We could go cheaper at conference time. He went and when he came back, he said, "I think the Lord is accepting my pioneering in Mexico and now he wants me to get where there is a temple." So we sold out what we could and moved by team up to Utah. We were seven weeks going [laughter] partly because of rain. When we [came] to the Colorado River we had to stay camped there for a week. That river had risen so high that it washed the ferry boat ashore and broke the rope. [There was] a great big rope besides the cable. The cable didn't break, but the rope broke and they had to repair it. My husband and his son [George Benjamin Wilson, the only son living at that time from his first marriage] helped them get the ferry boat out and get it repaired so we could go across.

FH: Where did you go?

MR: We went to Hillsdale [Garfield County, Utah]. That is where he had lived and where his brothers lived. We [arrived] there November 29, [1911]. We were so cold there. That is as cold as Bryce Canyon [National Park]. It is a [very] cold place.

FH: You weren't used to that [because] you had been down in a warm climate.

MR: There was a log house. I think it had been his. His brothers got together and we put it up in a hurry. They could hardly get the chimney built for the fireplace so they brought stovepipes and made a big stovepipe at the top of the chimney. We lived there, but we weren't prepared for that cold place. We went to bed with our coats on. [Laughter] We had an upstairs and the children's bed was on the floor and the fireplace kept that warm. They slept quite comfortably up there. Some nights we would get up and warm our quilts and go back to bed. [Laughter] He died there September 17, 1912. After he died, one of his daughters lived in my home. She and her husband came from Mexico and took care of some of my children. I asked the Relief Society if they would help me take training in obstetrics. I told them I would pay them when I came back. I would work for them. So I took my baby [Joseph Hyrum] and went up [to Salt Lake City] and found I couldn't manage a baby and go to school. I had to do something. I sent for

one of my daughters [Adelia Mirl] to come. She was staying with a cousin. Another daughter [Stella] came first. Then the other one came and they took care of my baby while I went to school.

FH: Where did you go to school?

MR: In Salt Lake [City].

FH: Was this a nursing course sponsored by the Relief Society?

MR: Yes. Dr. Margaret C. Roberts [Mrs. B. H. Roberts] was a very good trainer. I did a washing or an ironing every afternoon. The school was held until about one o'clock in the morning. I managed to come out with a diploma and went back to Hillsdale. There were such a few people in Hillsdale and Hatch [Garfield County, Utah] and the folks in Tropic didn't have any [nurses]. Their nurse and obstetrician had left, so they [had] me come over. They moved me over so I could take care [of them]. The Relief Society asked me to take care of one lady. I stayed with her a week and took care of her [while she was] in bed. They told me if I would take care of her children, I [wouldn't] owe them anymore. I was doing pretty well in Tropic. Most of the time all three towns: Tropic, Cannonville and Henrieville [all in Garfield County, Utah], called on me. There was another nurse in Cannonville.

FH: You had a pretty good-sized area to take care of.

MR: Yes. I worked at that. Brother [Franklin Dolbel] Riding had lost his wife. His children had whooping cough and they were alone. He had gone off to work and the Relief Society said they would pay me if I would go there and take care of those children [who] had whooping cough. It ended up that we married. There wasn't much romance about it. We just put our families together. My children moved down [as] he had a bigger house. I was living in a house that belonged to Tropic. I moved down there.

FH: How many children did Brother Riding have?

MR: [He had] six [children].

FH: Did you have some children after this?

MR: Yes. I had three children after that. The first one died.

FH: What was the first one's name?

MR: We named him Pat Marlin [Riding]. Marlin was my oldest brother's name. [Pat] died when he was about five weeks old. I had been tipped over in a car before he died and this arm was broken above the elbow.

FH: [That is your] left arm.

MR: He never digested his food. There was something wrong with his stomach. He lost a pound a week for several weeks and then he died [November 5, 1917]. He was about nine pounds when he died. He was eleven pounds when he was born. I had one baby that weighed fourteen pounds. We didn't know anything about dieting. We would just eat what [food] we had.

FH: Tell about the other children you had with Brother Riding.

MR: Robert [Dennis Riding] grew up and married Elsa Barton. They have eleven children. One of their boys [Van B. Riding] is home from a [LDS] mission in Japan. He said that the Japanese people are [very] nice when you can get under the crust. [Laughter]

[Van served his mission in France. One of her other grandchildren must have gone to Japan.]

FH: When you get to know them. Where are they living now?

MR: They are living in Kanab [Kane County, Utah] now. He works in a sawmill [and] is a good worker. The bosses like him and he does good work.

FH: There was one more child. What was its name?

MR: That was Rebecca [Riding]. She married [Fred] Bert Wetzel [after his divorce from Adelia Mirl]. [They] have seven children. [She] died in child bed [childbirth] and left seven children. The father adopted them out into homes where there were no children. Some of them have done extra [well]. Her oldest boy has been on a [LDS] mission in South America. One of the younger ones was in Marysvale and bore his testimony. He said he was going to go on a mission. He bore a wonderful testimony in the meeting in Marysvale.

FH: Is there anything you can think of that we might have missed?

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FH: I would like you to tell about your marriage to your first husband and [how it] happened.

MR: We were sealed by one of the apostles, President Brigham Young's son, Brigham Young, Jr. He was especially sent down for us if we paid his way from Mesa, Arizona to Deming [New Mexico]. We [went] out and brought him inside the temple [so] we could be married. We had to be married in the middle of the night because we had to take him back.

FH: [Did] he come down to Mexico and perform the marriage? Were you, at that time in Mexico, sealed for eternity?

MR: Yes. They did that in Mexico all the time. They had a room in [Colonia] Diaz, a prayer room. There was one man who was ordained for that purpose. President [George] Teasdale was there first. He was one of the apostles. He lived in Mexico. He was the president of the Mexican Stake. Afterwards, it [was] called the Juarez Stake. There was [a] man ordained and set apart to seal people who were too poor to go to the temples. So they were sealed out of the temple.

FH: That is interesting. Later on, did you go to the temple?

MR: Yes. I went to the temple and my husband had money sent to him so he could go. I [received] money from my mother's property and was able to go to the temple. I went to [the] Manti [Temple in Sanpete County, Utah]. I went first to [the] Salt Lake [Temple], but I went to Manti because I [went] through the Manti Temple before it was finished. It seemed like, when I was a child, we carried eggs to Primary for [the] temple donation. When I was a [young] girl, there would be a big pan filled with eggs that little children had carried in their dirty hands. [Laughter] It was a temple donation. Of course, the temple workers had to be fed. So I wanted to go to Manti. I [had] a chance to go to see his family [who] lived in Hillsdale. The brother [George Hyrum Wilson] said there was some work he should do in the temple. It should be his privilege to do it. His daughter was teaching school. He [received] money from her and sent it to my husband so he could come to the temple. We came at conference time because the church authorities had made arrangements [so] we could get tickets cheaper at conference time.

In the first days down in Mexico, [people] were just too poor to get out and go to temples. There were three places that I know of that were dedicated for temple sites for [the] people down there. So I am expecting some time [temples] will be built there.

FH: Have you been active in church all of your life?

MR: Yes. I was a second counselor in the Relief Society in Tropic. I was set apart as a Relief Society teacher in 1901 in Morales. Whenever there was a Relief Society, and sometimes there wasn't, wherever I was I went visiting teaching. Mr. [Evan Erastmus] Cooper [owner of Cooper Rest Haven] tells me that I went [to] his home. He was living on the hill here.

FH: After all this experience [in] your life, I think you are well qualified to leave some counsel and advice to those —

[END OF REORDING THREE.]

MR: Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy. That is a sacred thing that I like to do. Observe *The Word of Wisdom*, little things that we don't look carefully for. I know the gospel is true. I know the Prophet Joseph [Smith] was a true prophet; that Brigham Young was his follower. I enjoy reading the wonderful messages they have left. I would be happy to know that my children are all studying the lessons they give to us in the church, Relief Society, Primary, Mutual [Improvement Association] and all the wonderful lessons. They are for our benefit and good.

FH: How many years have you been alone now?

MR: Brother Riding died December 17, 1952 [in Tropic].

FH: You have been alone quite a few years.

MR: Yes. My brother [Rulon Cox] came to live with me. He lived with me about five years, but he had used tobacco. He was only three years old when we went to Mexico. He played with the little Mexicans so maybe they taught him to use tobacco. I have seen mothers take their cigarettes out of their mouths [while] holding their babies. Anyway, he used [tobacco] and had a bad heart. The doctor had told him he couldn't live five years [when] he came down to see me. After he came down, he quit tobacco and had his endowments. He was a widower.

FH: What is this man's name?

MR: [His name was] Rulon Cox. He had a family of seven children. One of them lives here. She [Verga Helois Cox] was called on a [LDS] mission but [became] so ill she had to be put in a hospital and finally sent home. Mary's only son filled a mission. [Adelia] Mirl's son filled a mission in Mexico. Rebecca's son filled a mission in South America.

FH: [That is] a lot of missionaries.

MR: Not many. I know a widow in Tropic [who] has sent seven boys on [LDS] missions. She just about had a missionary coming home every year for quite awhile. My stepson [Franklin Dee Riding] was the only one of my own sons in my family that went on a mission. He came home with a stroke. He was paralyzed on his right side. He never married, but he went to the temple and worked in the temple for many years. He died when he was fifty years old.

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FH: How many descendants do you have?

MR: Of my great-grandchildren there are [inaudible] at the last count. I don't know. They come so fast you can't keep track of them. I have about thirty-five grandchildren. I don't know how many great-great-grandchildren. When I count my stepchildren it is way up to fifty-six, something like that.

FH: You have a beautiful and wonderful posterity now. Your kingdom is growing.

MR: I have [and] I appreciate them. I am very appreciative of my stepchildren. They are very good to me, extra good. My own children, they can't be beat. [Laughter]

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MR: I pray [to] our Heavenly Father that He will bless and prosper every one of my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren and [that] they [will] all strive to serve Him and keep His commandments. The words don't come to me like I want them to. I hope they will grow up honoring His name. I hope all of them that can, will remember their father and will have peace in their lives.

FH: There is one thing we have passed up that ought to be mentioned in here. In your ability as a nurse and midwife, how many babies have you assisted into the world?

MR: I delivered 525 babies. There was only one woman that died that I was taking care of and very few babies [died].

FH: That is a very enviable record. Have you done a lot of nursing besides that?

MR: Yes. Not too much, just some.

[END OF RECORDING FOUR. END OF INTERVIEW.]