

Interview with
ERASTUS SNOW GARDNER

January 23, 1969

**VOICES OF REMEMBRANCE FOUNDATION
ORAL HISTORY COLLECTION**

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ERASTUS SNOW GARDNER

Erastus Snow Gardner was interviewed on January 23, 1969 in St. George, Washington County, Utah by Fielding H. Harris, a representative of the Voices of Remembrance Foundation. He related his personal history of living in various parts of Utah.

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

EG: [My name is] Erastus Snow Gardner.

FH: [When were] you born?

EG: [I was born] June 10, 1892.

FH: [Where were] you born?

EG: [I was born in] Pine Valley [Washington County] Utah.

FH: What was your father's name?

EG: [His name was] Reuben Gardner.

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

EG: [Her name was] Lucy Almira (Snow) Gardner.

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

EG: As far back as I can remember we had cattle and horses. I was always interested in [horses]. We had some gentle horses [that] we used to like to ride. I remember before I was old enough to go to school, they [held] summer school in Pine Valley. I would ride [a] little bay mare down around the school building to see the children [who] were in school. I would ride alone all over town.

FH: Weren't you were [fairly] young to be riding alone?

EG: Yes. I was four or five years old. Mother said that when I was three [years old] I put a quilting frame up on the back of this little mare and crawled up the quilting frame to get on her. [Laughter]

FH: [Laughter]

EG: [I] tied her to the fence and mother took the bridle reins off the fence for me to [ride]. I don't suppose I went down around the school building when I was three [years old].

FH: At least you went for a ride!

EG: Yes, I went for a ride around the [ranch].

FH: That is remarkable for [a] three year old.

EG: I remember when I was a boy, there used to be roundups bringing the cattle from the winter ranges. There used to be a lot of cattle owned around Pine Valley. I remember as youngsters, we just about lived to see [the] cattle come over the ridge into Pine Valley. They would string over that ridge for hours. We youngsters would go down to the lower end where the fields were and climb up on the fence to watch them come into town. They would bring the cattle right up into town [to] separate [and] each man [would] take his cattle from there.

Ranchers from the whole southern part of the state would ride together on the ranges to gather their cattle. They would separate their cattle at what they called [the] Magotsu [Creek] corral [and] take them to the different towns from there. We would drive all the cattle that belonged to Pine Valley into Pine Valley, separate them and each man would take his cattle to his summer range.

FH: This is the first time I have heard that explained. Can you tell about your [education] in those early years? How much [education did] you have?

EG: [I went] through the eighth grade in Pine Valley [and] then went to Logan [Cache County, Utah] for one full year. [I] went back later for a winter course. [Later] I went to Cedar City [Iron County, Utah] to BAC [Branch Agriculture College] for one full year. [I] went back for a winter course and that was all

FH: Wasn't [that] more [education] than most people in your area and your age [received]?

EG: [There were] people in Pine Valley [who] desired education. A lot of them graduated from school and quite a number [of them] went on and [received] their doctorate degrees.

FH: I think that is wonderful. In those early years did you enjoy school?

EG: Yes I think I did. I [was] probably a little ornery in school [laughter], mischievous I guess, but I enjoyed my schooling.

FH: Where they good teachers?

EG: Yes, we had [very] good teachers. I believe Ida Bracken was the first school teacher that I had. We had what we called the little room and the big room. The younger children had the little room that was the north end of our church building in Pine Valley. They were in the lower rooms. [Two of my teachers were] Ida Bracken and Josephine Gardner.

FH: Was Josephine Gardner a relative of yours?

EG: Yes, she was a relative. We had summer school when we were youngsters.

FH: Summer school up there wouldn't have been as uncomfortable as it would have been in St George.

EG: No, it wouldn't have been. Rose Jarvis used to teach summer school. She was teaching summer school there when I was a youngster and went down around the school house on my horse.

Addie Duffin I remember was summer school teacher when I went. Ray Cox was a nephew of Addie; his mother was a sister to Addie Duffin. Ray Cox, Virgil Rupp and I were all just a little bit ambitious when we were [youngsters]. Mrs. Duffin used to have a little end of a buggy whip and if we didn't do things right, she would tan us around our bare legs. [Laughter]

FH: [Laughter] I don't suppose you liked that!

EG: Not too much! [Laughter] [One time] we were having summer school in [the] bigger room. I had done something that [caused] her [to] put me in the little room. After she went back in her room I raised the window and crawled out and went down to the field to see my dad [who was] cutting hay. I went down [to] the field and he sent me home for an oil can. I remember that! [Laughter]

FH: [Laughter].

EG: We enjoyed school.

FH: Did you enjoy the [education] you got away from home?

EG: Yes, very much.

FH: Did you have any adventures when you were young? Did you ever have any bears bother the cattle?

EG: Oh golly, I'll say! We had bears there that would kill any amount of cattle. They had hunters come in and hunt bears. They finally killed one and the other one left but he [had] killed thousands of dollars worth of cattle.

FH: Did it make you nervous to be out on the range knowing they were around?

EG: It sure did. One time we were camped on the mountain gathering the cattle. My uncle [Osro Gardner] and two sons, my dad and I were camped up on the mountain [in] Grass Valley. We would hobble our horses out at night. Dad and Archie Gardner, one of my cousins, went out after the horses in the morning and they had gone two or three miles. When they found the horses, a bunch of cattle come down through the flat where they were, just a-running to beat the band with manure all over their hind ends [from] running.

They brought the horses back [and] we saddled up and back tracked and found where the bear — they said a bear can't run down hill. I had always heard that. This old bear had run down the side of [the] hill, caught a yearling out of the bunch and killed it right there on the hill. My dad used to say that bears liked honey. I remember [he] would [put] strychnine [and] honey in cans [out] in different places. We had hunting parties that came in. I rode a lot when we were hunting bear. We had our hair standing on end quite a few times! [Laughter]

FH: I can imagine. That would be [quite an experience].

EG: [The bear] came there in Pine Valley and killed cattle right in the fields.

FH: He must have been a [fairly] big [bear].

EG: He was a big grizzly.

FH: You can have my part of the bear hunting; I wouldn't care for that! [Laughter]

EG: [Laughter] My wife now (I married a widow) she lost her husband the same time I lost my wife [Clara Maude (Crosby) Gardner] down here and her father-in-law [Joseph Milton "Mitt" Moody] killed [a] big grizzly bear later.

[First wife of Erastus Snow Gardner was Clara Maude (Crosby) Gardner. His second wife was Hazel (Olsen) Moody Gardner.]

FH: A man [who] killed one of those bears was a hero around [there].

EG: Yes, he sure was.

FH: Did you have any accidents that you can remember?

EG: I never had any accidents that left me permanently crippled but I had a lot of horses fall with me when we were running. I have had horses fall with me and roll clear over me. I [thought] I would be about dead but I [always] came out of it alright.

FH: [Laughter] It is a miracle what you can come through.

EG: Yes it is. One time [when] I was riding up in the mountains we drove some cattle across a little —

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EG: — as we crossed the wash the horse jumped up the bank and the bank caved off from under his hind feet. He went over backward and [landed] down in the bottom of the wash but I got out from under him before he [landed].

FH: Wow that was a close one!

EG: Yes, it was. My cousin was there at the time. I got out without getting hurt.

FH: Can you tell [about] an experience [you had] where you were riding and a neighbor saw your horse standing —

EG: That was when I was just a boy. I had a little gray mare, one of the best little animals [there] ever was. She was a speedy little animal too. I had gone to the upper field to get some cattle out of the field that shouldn't have been there. [There was] a neighbor [who] was just a little younger than I was in a field higher up. He saw this little mare standing in the field for a long time and he came over to investigate. When he got there, I was sitting on the ground with my arms around her hind legs. I was unconscious [and] didn't know anything.

FH: It was a good thing that horse was gentle.

EG: Yes, it was. He [put] me on the horse and led her home. Just before we got down to my home, I regained consciousness enough so that I could remember him bringing me home.

FH: You have had some narrow escapes.

EG: Yes, I have had a lot of horses.

FH: Was your life's occupation to be a rancher?

EG: Yes. I have been [a rancher] all my life, ever since I was big enough to ride a horse. [Since I] was about three years old. [Laughter]

FH: That is a long time I would say. [Did] you have good training [from] your father?

EG: Oh yes, that was his life too.

FH: During the years that you were growing up, were you active in [The] Church [of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints]?

EG: Yes, we attended all the church activities: Sunday school, Priesthood meetings and church [services].

FH: Were you ordained in the Priesthood?

EG: Yes, [I was] ordained regularly: deacon, teacher and priest.

FH: Before you were married, [did] you have a position in the Sunday school?

EG: I was superintendent of [the] Sunday school. I don't remember just how many years [but it was for] quite a while.

FH: Sounds like that you had opportunities for growth and development.

EG: Yes.

FH: What can you remember about your father? What kind of a person was he?

EG: He was one of the grandest men. Nobody had a better father than my dad. He was a [very] honorable man. He never used tobacco or liquor. [If] you followed his example, you would be doing what was right. He rode the range for years and years. [He] was always put in as the boss when all of the riders from all over the country [area] were together. They always put him in as the boss to direct the riding. He always took the longest ride himself; he would take a good partner and take the longest ride himself.

FH: Do you remember his parents at all?

EG: Yes, his father was Robert Gardner, one of the early settlers of this country [area]. He had a lot to do with the building of the St. George Temple. He and his brothers had lumber and flour mills around Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah]. When he came down here, he run saw mills for a long time. He was out on Mt. Trumbull [on the Arizona Strip] and sawed much of the lumber that is in the St. George Temple.

[My] grandmother was Jane (McKeown) [Gardner]. I remember she was a small woman but I don't remember much about her. She lived with her youngest son, Osro ["Oz"] Gardner.

FH: You have a rich heritage from these fine people.

EG: I sure do.

FH: What do you remember about your mother?

EG: I can say the same [for] her as I did about my dad. There never was a better mother than she was. She trained me [in] my moral standards from the time I was big enough to remember. [And to] especially take active part in my church meetings.

FH: She helped to make your background strong.

EG: She sure did. I don't think I ever heard her say a bad thing about anybody. If she ever heard anyone else saying too much, she would try [to] stop them.

FH: Can you remember her parents at all?

EG: I can remember her mother, Sally (Adams) Snow. She was an invalid from the time I can remember. I remember grandmother Snow was in bed in her own home for years. She lived with one of her daughters, Emma L. [(Snow)] Burgess, for quite a number of years. Grandfather Snow was dead before I could remember him.

FH: I see; what was his name?

EG: William. He and Erastus Snow were brothers. It is where I got my name.

FH: That is a name of great [importance] in the church. Your parents had how many children?

EG: [They had] twelve [children].

FH: That is a [very] fine family. Can you name them?

EG: Yes. Reuben Gardner was the oldest, then Clarence, Mason, Misha, Eva, myself, Iva, Laura, Annie, Helen, Effie, and the last one was Murray. He died when he was six weeks old and I have been heartbroken ever since. I wanted a little brother so badly.

FH: Isn't that a shame. You have a wonderful knowledge that sometime you will see him again.

EG: We sure hope so.

FH: Did the rest of the children grow up?

EG: We had kind of a sad thing happen. My father was called to Scotland on a [LDS] mission and left the older son in charge of things with father's younger brother, Osro, [to] help [oversee] things. While father was on his mission, Reuben and

another cousin, J. X. [Gardner], were driving cattle. It was in the fall [during] threshing time and it was cold enough that ground had frozen. Reuben went to [the] head [of the herd], turned around [the] corner of a wire fence to head [off] some cattle and the horse's feet slipped out from under him. [The horse] fell and when he got up Reuben's foot hung up in the stirrup and the horse kicked him to death. The thresher [machine] was going not too far away and those men came running down. [This happened] was when I was three years old and I remember when they brought him home on a litter.

My next brother, Clarence, married and became a doctor. He never had any children. His first wife died and he married again. They were living in Oakland, California. He had a little heart tremor himself but he had some patients in the hospital in Oakland. One morning when he was there, the power went off [and] the elevators wouldn't work. He started climbing the stairs to see some of his patients and had a heart attack. It took him right off.

My next brother, Mason, never married. He went on a [LDS] mission to Holland. While he was over there, his health failed him. He came back [and] I guess World War I was on. He came back and finished the mission in the United States. He grew up, was a wonderful man and a [very] hard worker. [He was] always willing and ready to help anybody. He [has] died.

[When] my sisters were all old enough, [they] married and had wonderful families. I have lost two sisters [in] the last few years. My baby brother died when he was six weeks old.

FH: Did you have any faith-promoting experiences? Did you ever have an answer to prayer?

EG: I [think] I have had answers to a lot of prayers. [There were] times [when] we didn't have answers when we prayed, but then there are [other times when we did]. When I was a youngster, I rode on the mountain quite a bit. We had a team of horses, both [were] white horses, and my dad had sent me on the mountain after those horses. I remembered hearing my uncle, Osro Gardner, telling [about] when he was a boy they had their mules turned out and he went out to hunt them. He hunted and hunted and hadn't found them so he got down on his knees and prayed. He said when he got up off his knees he happened to look and saw a mule's ears. He went over and found those mules in a little draw behind some horses.

I remembered him telling that so before I got on the mountain top I got down by a big rock and prayed that I would find my horses. When I got over [the] top, something seemed to direct me and I went right down [to] the east side of the mountain where I had never been before. I found the horse tracks and tracked them and found the band of horses. But one of the team was a mare and she was gone. I brought [the] band of horses back and put them in the corral. Then [I]

went down on the northwest corner of the mountain and I found [the] mare with a bunch of wild horses. [I] went right to her. I was riding a good saddle horse and I ran in between her and [the] band of wild horses and drove her back to the corral. Seems like I was directed; at least I have always felt that way.

FH: Sure, there isn't any question that that can happen that way. During these years that you were growing up, what did you do for fun?

EG: We played baseball and used to have quite a lot [of] races. On our holidays we had foot races and horse races. Pine Valley used to be a gathering place. We used to have jubilees in July and people from out around Panaca [Nevada] and Bunkerville [Nevada] and Enterprise [Washington County, Utah] and St. George — people from all over the country [area] — would come to Pine Valley for the jubilee. Sometimes it would [last for] three or four days.

[We] would have horse races, boxing bouts and we used to have tilting. We would put a pole up and then a stick out from the pole. A wire would hold a ring [and] we would run under the ring with a horse [with] what we called a tilting pole. [It was] just a small pole and you would try to take [the] ring off the wire with the pole. That used to be a lot of fun. We had plenty to do!

Our fields were fenced together quite a lot [and] in the wintertime there was what we called the slough. In the winter the water would run down through this area and it would be ice for a long, long way. We would take those fences down and have skating parties. [We would] build fires by the side of the ice and skate until we got cold and come back [to warm up].

[END OF RECORDING ONE.]

EG: We [also] had hand sleighs. Dad would make us [very] nice hand sleighs that we could pull around. There were a lot of hills around that were steep enough that we could make sleigh runs. We would pull our sleighs up the hill and come down the hills. We sure did have some fun! We [also] had homemade bob sleighs that [were] used to haul logs. We did a lot of sleigh riding.

FH: Did you ever have any dances [in Pine Valley]?

EG: Yes. We had dances from the time I was [old] enough to dance. We had [very] enjoyable times. It was a small town, but it was large enough to have a lot of good social activities. There wasn't anyone around [who] would get drunk. We never had that kind of trouble [at our dances].

FH: Good clean fun! What kind of music did you have [for the] dances?

EG: We had mostly violin music. Will Bracken is the first [person] I remember who used to play for the dances. His son, Vern [Bracken], used to play for the dances

when we were [youngsters]. The Holt [family] moved to Pine Valley and Roy used to play for the dances.

FH: The fun that you had was [activities] that you manufactured for yourself. It was self-made fun. Have you enjoyed music?

EG: I have always enjoyed music. I don't know how many harmonicas my folks [bought] for me when I was a youngster. I could play *Home Sweet Home* and a few [songs], but I spoiled a lot of harmonicas. [Laughter] I never could play a musical sound but I have [enjoyed] music all my life.

FH: Have you enjoyed reading?

EG: Yes, I have enjoyed reading quite a lot. I should have read church books more, I guess. I remember [that] I used to read a lot [of] books. *The Little Shepherd of Kingdom Come* and books like that.

FH: Have these [books] had an effect on your life?

EG: Yes, I just liked good books. Mother always had good books for us to read.

FH: It sounds like your mother engineered a lot of good things for you.

EG: She sure did!

FH: [Would] you tell about your courtship and marriage? How did you happen to get acquainted with your wife?

EG: When we were youngsters around Pine Valley we all had our girl friends. I don't remember just what age I was. I had an uncle [who] lived in St. George. [He] was working at the temple and had a home in Pine Valley. [His home] was right on the same ground that I own and where my home is now. [His name was] William Gardner. He was called to work in the temple and they had their home here. In the summer, his girls would come up and spend time in Pine Valley. They always brought their chums. I had a cousin, Beth [Gardner], [who] was the same age as me. She would bring girl friends with her. One of her friends that I got acquainted with was [Clara] Maude Crosby.

We went with each other for a number of years. We were not old enough for it to amount to much. I came down here to see her one time. She didn't know that I was coming and she was out with another fellow. [Laughter] When I got back home I had a letter from her and I just sent the letter back unopened. [Laughter] Then we played out [broke up]. [Another] cousin of mine, Anna Snow, and Beth wrote letters to me to try to get me to come back. They [wrote]: "You broke our hearts as well as hers when you quit coming down." [Laughter] But I didn't go with her again for quite awhile. I had other girl [friends] but I never got over

knowing that she was the one I wanted, I guess. Finally, she went to Logan to school and stayed summers in Salt Lake [City, Salt Lake County, Utah] working at Auerbach's [Department Store]. A number of times I thought about going up there to see her but I never did.

[The] next winter I came down [here] with the purpose of trying to make up with her. I courted her during that holiday season. While I was here [in St. George] my dad called me from Pine Valley. At that time, we had cattle on the range down southwest of Delta [Millard County, Utah]. My uncle's cattle and my dad's cattle were together down there. [There] had been a [very] bad winter. My uncle called dad [from] Delta and said the cattle were in [very] bad shape and that he had better come and take care of them. My dad told me to go right up [there] and he would buy me a new outfit and not even come to Pine Valley to get it. I was to buy me boots and trousers from here. So I went up and borrowed a saddle from a cousin in Cedar City [and] I went to Delta to help take care of [the] cattle. That was a [very] bad winter. I started writing to Maude as soon as I [arrived in] Delta. We gathered [the] cattle and it was just cold enough that [they] froze to death while we were gathering them. I came around a cabin in that desert and there was a big bull laying there. I [tried] to scare him up [but] he was frozen to death — dead right there. We gathered all the cattle we could find that hadn't frozen to death and brought them into Delta to feed. I was mighty thankful to get back and find a letter from this girl!

FH: [Laughter] At least you had your heart warmed!

EG: I had my heart warmed up! We sure had a hard time that winter. Another fellow had been going with her some, a [very] fine fellow. I hadn't gone with her for a number of years. I came down here [during] holiday time and took her out. Soon after I left, of course, this other fellow came back. I wrote a [fairly] loving letter to her after I [went] back to Delta and told her how I felt. She told me later that she wrote me back and when she read her own letter, she just tore it up. [Laughter] I guess it had been a little lovelier than she wanted to admit. [Laughter] While I was up there, this other fellow had asked her to marry him. When she didn't accept, he said he didn't think a short time could make a difference. She said it hadn't been a short time, it has been for years. [Laughter] He probably didn't know about [me] then. She was a lovely girl and I sure was fortunate to have her marry me.

When I came back from Delta taking care of [the] cattle, we were married the next spring. I came down and asked her if she would marry me. She said she would and we were married that next June.

FH: Where were you married?

EG: [We were married] in the St. George Temple [on June 5, 1917].

FH: Where did make your home [after] you married?

EG: We went to Pine Valley. I was going to say we stayed there all the time, but we didn't. My brother [Mason "Mace" Gardner] and I stayed there in the winter [and] we fed the cattle. I rented a place close to my dad in St. George and she lived here. We lived in part of her mother's [Lena Albertine (Mathis) Crosby] house, the old [Jesse] Crosby home. There had been enough people move out of Pine Valley so that it [didn't] justify holding a school there. When our children were old enough to go to school, we had to bring our children here.

FH: How many children did you folks have?

EG: We had four [children].

FH: Start with the oldest one and tell about each one.

EG: Dean Crosby [Gardner] was the oldest boy. He was born on April 14th. I can't remember just exactly the year now. He went through school here and graduated. Then he went on a [LDS] mission [in] northeastern Montana and up into Canada. [When] he came home, he went into [military] service and was [assigned to] the medical department. He was in Germany at the end of [World] War [II]. He was [part] of the first ones [who] went into Germany. He said [that] one time his group got a little ahead of themselves and were right up ahead of where Germans had been captured. [When] he came [home from the service] he went to Logan to [Utah State College, Logan, Cache County, Utah] for a couple of years. He married Marce Higbee and followed the same occupation as we had. They have three sons and one daughter. They have a winter home in St. George and a home in Pine Valley.

We had so many dry years and low prices for cattle. It cost us about twice as much to take care of those cattle as we got out of them. It was that way for a number of years. A friend of Dean's was the [Washington County Assessor] and he didn't [feel] the commissioners were giving him enough help [so] he decided he would quit. The county commissioners asked Dean if he would be interested in the assessor [position]. I told him, "The way the prices are in cattle, if you can get in anything that is bringing any money, you better take it." So he told them they [could] appoint him [the] assessor. He was taking care of my cattle at [the] time and I knew that he couldn't handle the range cattle (I had a bunch of registered cattle too) and the registered cattle and the assessor business. I sold my range cattle and range rights and kept the purebred cattle.

We pastured the purebred cattle in the summer [and] I bought range out on the Arizona Strip. The ranges are all fenced to keep the purebred cattle separate from other cattle. They are quite easy to take care of [and] he and his boys are taking care of the cattle. His oldest boy is on a [LDS] mission in Florida. He is a zone leader and has nineteen elders under him. He is in Jacksonville, Florida. His

mission will be up in March [1969]. He has put in his two years time. The second boy received a call recently to go on a [LDS] mission to Denmark. He [will] leave February 8, [1969]. He has a close friend here [who] was his school mate [and he] is going to Finland. They [planned] to leave together. Just the last week or two the church changed their plans some. They didn't have a place around here that could teach Danish or Finnish and they would have to go over there to learn [the languages]. Last Sunday our bishop told us that the church had decided to have the languages taught at Ricks College in Idaho. The boys had [planned] on leaving the United States on [February] 11, [1969] so I guess they will go right to Ricks College and learn the languages there.

[Dean's] youngest boy is president of the senior class at Dixie High School and his daughter is going to junior high [school].

Maurene [Gardner] my second [child] married Mazel Johnson. They [lived in] Salt Lake [City] first, then [moved] to Portland. She was active working in the church and Relief Society. She had a heart attack and died in Portland and left her husband with two children, a boy and a girl. He [moved] back to Washington D. C, somewhere in [that area], and was working for [a] television [company]. [In] the last two or three years, he came back here. He and his son got kind of crossways. They just didn't get along. His son came here to his grandparent and his father's brothers. Two of [his uncles, Sheldon and Grant,] live here. Last year [the] daughter lived with her aunt, Brother Johnson's daughter, and went to school in Fillmore [Millard County, Utah]. This year she is living with my daughter [Lois] in Twin Falls, Idaho. The boy is in France on a [LDS] mission. His grandfather and I are supporting him. We are each paying half and there are others in the family [who] send money but the two of us guaranteed we would [split] the expense.

Our other daughter, Lois [Gardner] married George Fry, a [very] fine man. He didn't belong to the church when she married him. We [didn't want] to have her marry out of the church but we [felt] he was a [very] fine fellow. I have seen too many [marriages] broken up that way [when] they marry and don't get along nearly as well as if they [had] married [in the church]. I married them right here. I was the bishop at the time [and] married them right in this room. I never mentioned religion to him. I [thought] this: if you can't convert him by example, there is no need to try and talk to him. Later on, somebody converted him [and] he joined the church. He has been very active and is an exceptionally fine boy [and] is a Seventy. They have four daughters. The oldest daughter married a McDonald boy from Heber City [Wasatch County, Utah] and they live in Hooper [Weber County], Utah. They have a two and one-half year old son and a baby girl [born] last summer [1968]. So I have two great-grandchildren.

My youngest child died when he was a baby. That was a heartbreaker. It just seemed like he had come to take the place of my younger brother [who] died. That winter we [were] feeding cattle in Delta again. When it came time to move

them in the spring, a friend of mine, Royal Hunt, [helped] me move the cattle [from Delta]. When I left here my wife was living in my dad's home here in town. The baby boy was just big enough [that he was running his fingers through my hair and kind of hanging on to it when I left [that] morning. We shipped the cattle back [to] Modena [Iron County, Utah] on the train. When we got there, I had word that he was sick. They brought me right home. When I got to Central [Washington County, Utah], I called to see how he was [and] he was dead. That was sure a heartbreaker!

[In 1957] on Christmas Eve my wife, [Clara] Maude, had a heart attack. Dr. [Wilford J.] Reichmann came and took her right to the hospital. She got better and wanted to come home. She had to have oxygen all the time. We brought her home and had to take her back. Finally, she died in the hospital on April 22, [1958], eleven years ago.

FH: Tell about your activities in life since you married. You told about the children; now tell about what you did.

EG: Yes, I got a little ahead of my story. We had a very happy life going back and forth. [Clara Maude] was put in as Relief Society president by Bishop Jeter Snow. I was [removed] from the Sunday school superintendence to be a counselor to Bishop Snow. Then he was called to work in the St. George Temple and I [became the] bishop in Pine Valley. After he left, Malin Cox and Levi Snow were my counselors. We were in the bishopric for thirteen years. We had a lot of good experiences there. Harold Snow was stake president at that time. I told him I [thought] they should release me. Then I felt kind of ashamed of myself when I found out what he had to go through. But they did release me. Then President W. [William] O. Bentley chose me as one of his counselors in the Stake High Priest's Presidency.

As far as civilian life was concerned, I never [thought] I would be in politics. But Roxie Romney had quite a lot to do with the Democratic Party. She called in Pine Valley and asked me if I would run for the —

[END OF RECORDING TWO.]

EG: — [Utah] House of Representatives. At first I told her, "No, I just didn't want anything to do with politics." They said [to] think it over and then let them know. I talked with my wife and decided that maybe I would and told them I would run. I was elected to the House of Representatives and we went to Salt Lake [City]. I was elected for three terms [and] that was a wonderful experience.

They talk about crooked politicians and to hear people talk, you would think that was all a politician was, just a crook. But there were sixty of us in the House and I believe twenty-one in the Senate [and] they were a fine bunch of people, wonderful people. Of course there were people [who] you didn't agree with,

maybe you didn't know the inside [inaudible] of a lot of them, but I sure had a lot of good friends there. We enjoyed that [experience] immensely.

FH: Was that was a good educational experience?

EG: Yes it was a [very] good experience. Then later I ran for the [Utah] Senate [against] Nelson Morgan from Iron County. I [received] 800 more votes in Washington County than he did, but he [received] 1,100 more [votes] in Iron County than I did. [Laughter] So he went, but I felt fortunate since [then] that I got out of politics at that time. I had plenty of other things to do.

As far as my other activities have been concerned, I was one of the vice-presidents of the [Utah] Cattle and Horse Growers Association. I don't [remember] how many years. I was president of the Pine Valley Cattle Association [for] I don't [remember] how many years. We [had] a lot of good experiences and we had quite a [few] nice vacations. We used to [attend] the American National Livestock Convention in Denver [Colorado]. The wife and I went to those [conventions] many times. [They started to] have the convention in different places. We went to Boise [Idaho and to] Reno [Nevada]. [The year] it was in Reno we didn't go any place after the convention [and] came back through Las Vegas [Nevada].

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EG: We had some close friends, Reuben Leach and his wife, Rita, and Royal Brinkerhoff and his wife, Beatrice. Beatrice and Rita were half-sisters. Reuben Leach's mother was my dad's sister. My dad's name was Reuben.

The six of us, the three couples, [began] traveling together. We went to Reno to a convention and came back through Las Vegas. [We] went to two different night clubs. One of them was an exceptionally good program. We went to Miami [Florida] to a convention. We drove down the west coast of Florida, then across to Miami [and] we had a tour over into Cuba. We spent two or three days [there]. It was [a very] nice trip; only going over, we sure did get seasick. [Laughter] It was quite a windy night. We had a convention [in] Fort Worth [Texas and] we went on down to Mexico City and spent a number of days down there.

[We attended] another convention [in] Colorado Springs [Colorado] and went up to Denver for a livestock convention. Then we had a convention in San Francisco [California]. Reuben and Royal and their wives didn't go on to Hawaii. Part of [the group] went on to Hawaii. The wife and I, [our] neighbors here, Marcel and Annie [E. (Bleak)] Schmutz, and my doctor brother's [Clarence] wife, Hilda Gardner, she lived in Oakland [California], and she went with us. We spent ten days in Hawaii. That was a wonderful trip! [We] paid our fees before we left and everything was furnished there. They had a limousine that took the five of us [and] we just went to the island of Oahu. We stayed at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel.

Everything was furnished us. We went to the [Laie] Hawaii Temple while we were there. Went down to the luau or hula or whatever! [Laughter]

FH: [Did you attend a] luau?

EG: Yes. [We] went through the temple and spent one evening [and] that was really wonderful.

FH: You have had a wonderful life and wonderful experiences!

EG: I have had quite an active and wonderful life. I have always had good health. For some recreation, more so after I [was] older, we began attending rodeos. I was never too much of an expert roper [but] I could catch [the calves] once in a while. [Laughter] I was in the money quite a lot of the time [while] roping. Louis Bowler married a niece of mine, Mildred [(Bunker)] Bowler. Louis and I used to double rope together. We caught and tied [a calf] over in Santa Clara [Washington County, Utah] in eighteen seconds. That was when you had to get off your horse and tie a double knot around both hind legs [of the calf]. I guess that was the fastest time that was ever [recorded] around this country [area]. I have [won] money double roping with my son, but [we] never won too much. But we had a lot of fun with it. I use to act as pick-up-man in bronco riding [events]

I had a black horse, "Shine," that was a registered stallion and a mare that was registered on the other side. This was a horse that I bought. He was a horse that was a run-away when I [bought] him. You would start to work and if he decided he wanted to go he would go! It took me quite a long while to train him, but that was one of the best horses in the country [area]. That was the best pick-up-horse that I have ever seen. I could just stand facing the chute where the horse come out, and when that horse come out bucking, this horse would just whirl and I would hold him. He was fast and I would hold him behind [the horse] that was bucking. Just as soon as the whistle blew I [would] loosened my reins and before you could say Jack Robinson I was right at the side of that [bucking] horse. I don't believe I was twenty-five yards [before] picking up the [rider].

FH: When you work with animals, do you learn to appreciate them?

EG: You sure do. That was a horse I never used a spur on. When you were cutting cattle it seemed like he could tell the one you wanted. He could just read that cow, what she was going to do, and he would be there. [Laughter] I had a number of different fellows say that was about the best horse they [had] ever seen. In fact, there were a lot of horses around [the] rodeos and my cousin told me the fellows he was around said that was the best horse in [the] rodeo. Just this winter, Arthur K. Hafen, (he is the patriarch here now) [and] we were raised on the range together. He teaches Sunday School [and] was in our priesthood class. As we started to [go to] our priesthood class he said to me, "I can just remember you

being on that shiny black horse with a lasso in your hand better than anything else!” [Laughter]

I was walking up from the yard one day and past [where] Brother Frehner [was] and we [started] talking. I didn’t know he had ever seen me on horseback. He and his brothers, one of them lived in Mesquite [Nevada] and one of them lived in Beaver Dam [Arizona], [and] he said they had been around some of these rodeos. He said, “I always admired you so much. You always had such a good outfit and you did really good work yourself.”

Both of those [comments] just surprised me so much. I never thought about [it and] didn’t think anybody else ever paid any attention to it.

FH: Yes, but people do.

EG: [Out] on the range this horse just knew about everything.

FH: Some animals really get to be intelligent

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EG: The *Western Livestock Journal* used to put on tours. We went on a tour all around California. There would be four or five bus loads and we would go to different ranches. [We] had a [very] good tour around here. One year they had a tour in Hawaii. It was two years after my [first] wife died. We covered four of the islands. We went to Oahu first and around to the cattle ranches [to] see how they [grew] their hay. They had big sprinklers and [we] went to the feed yard where they were feeding [their cattle].

We had some wonderful entertainment. We went to four of the islands [but] I can’t remember the names of them so well now. We had just left Oahu and started across to one of the other islands and [the pilot heard] a miss in one of the motors. They turned back and we got into another plane. I had a [very] nice movie camera in a bag and [when I] got off this plane [I] forgot it. [Laughter] They called back and had [someone] bring it [to me] on another plane. It was interesting to go on all those islands.

We were staying at Hilo when [the] volcano erupted. We went out there at night and [looked] right over to it [as] it was coming up. That was interesting. I took quite a lot of pictures when that red hot lava was shooting up in the air hundreds of feet. The next day the caravan took us down where [the] big volcano had been. [It] is now a great big crater. Down in the bottom of that [crater were] places built where you could look [out]. You could see the rivers of lava down in there but there was lots of country [area] that was just black lava. It was smoking all over there. That was the island of Hawaii, I guess. That is the big island. We [saw] all

those cattle ranches there. [The] Parker Ranch was the biggest cattle ranch in the world. It was very interesting.

FH: Do you think they do better with cattle over there than [we] do in the states?

EG: No, I don't think so. They didn't have as good cattle as we [have] in the states. They had some [very] good cattle and good country [area], but in the states here we have some [very] good [cattle] country [area] here. Sometimes, around in these areas it gets pretty tough. It looked [very] tough this winter but these last storms are going to help us.

FH: Is cattle ranching here still a good profitable industry?

EG: Well, it isn't so profitable now.

FH: It isn't?

EG: No, [not] the way things are now. The people [who] have to buy their meat out of these markets have to pay a heck of a price, but the producer isn't getting [any of] it. The other day in [the] High Priest meeting, Vernon Worthen had his brother-in-law there, Peterson [from] out west of Utah Lake [Utah County, Utah], Park Valley. [He probably means the Great Salt Lake because Park Valley is west of the Great Salt Lake which is in Box Elder County.]

He is a high priest and some of them [who] were visitors were asked to get up and tell a little about themselves that morning. He said that he was in the grain business and that anybody [who] was in the agricultural business now is worse off than anyone else. [What] he said [is] right too! [Laughter] He said cattle on [inaudible] should be \$.65 a pound and wheat should be [plus] \$3.00. Cattle are down somewhere at top at somewhere in the twenties —

FH: They can't come out like that.

EG: — and wheat was less than \$1.50 and parity [would] have been at \$3.00 and cattle at \$.65 a pound.

FH: There will have to be some changes made. After your [first] wife died did you meet another woman later on?

EG: Yes. I knew her former husband since we were children together. Her husband was Milton [Everett] Moody, a son of [Joseph] Milton [and Jane] Moody. [Joseph] Milton ["Mitt"] killed [the] big grizzly bear. Her husband was in the hospital [at] the same time my [first] wife was. [He was] taken to Salt Lake [City to] the LDS [Latter-day Saints] Hospital [and he was there] for quite awhile. His brother-in-law was Dr. [Wilford J.] Reichmann. [When] they found they couldn't

do any more for him up there, [they] brought him back [here]. He died in his own home. My wife died in the hospital.

About two years later, I asked this lady to go out with me. I had always admired her a lot. There were a lot of [very] fine widows around. I hadn't [planned] on getting married quite as quickly as I did. I had so darn many others trying to pick a wife for me —

FH: [Laughter]

EG: — and urging me to get married. I had friends write from different states to tell me to get married and telling me the fine people there were —

FH: You had to take some action in self defense.

EG: That's what I said; if I am going to get married, I am going to pick [her] myself. Her name is Hazel. She was an Olsen, Hazel (Olsen) [Moody]. She is a [very] nice lady and everyone likes her. She is just a wonderful lady. We both get along fine. I have furnished her with two nice homes, one winter and one summer. No one could have better care taken of them then she had taken care of me.

[Erastus Snow and Hazel (Olsen) Moody Gardner were married May 6, 1960 in St. George, Washington County, Utah.]

But I had the misfortune, about two years ago, [of having] a hemorrhage. I might go back just a little ways and tell that forty years ago I was plowing ground, breaking up new ground, and my double trees broke from a stiff stick. A splinter came back and pierced my left eye and knocked the lens out. That is when my doctor brother [Clarence] lived in Salt Lake [City]. I went up there and stayed with him for a month and was going to have my eye operated on.

The lens had come out into the eye [and] it looked just like the white of an egg. I was going to have that eye taken out. We had the date all set to have it done and an emergency came up. The doctor couldn't do it at that time and that very night I just decided I wasn't going to have that done. So I came home. I had to wear a seal [patch] over my eye for a long time.

I went on [a] round-up and I was gone about ten days. Of course, [I] was out in the dust. When I got home and looked in the glass [mirror] I could hardly believe my eyes, [the] lens had almost disappeared, and [it] just finally went clear out. I had glasses fitted but the two eyes would not focus the same, so I have never been able to use that eye. I just have the one eye.

FH: [Has] this [been] giving you problems lately?

EG: Yes. I have been to five different specialists and there is nothing that can be done for it. I can see to get around, and looking at you I can see that you are a man and have glasses on, but I can't any more tell who you are or anything like that. I met my own son over by the [United States] Post Office one day, met him right out in the middle of the street. He said, "Where are you going?" I didn't have any idea who [he] was. I can get around some.

My wife's brother-in-law, June Moody and his wife [Maida], live in California. They were very interested in me and [thought] I [should] come [to] a Los Angeles clinic [and maybe] they could do something for me. June said that he would make all the reservations and take me if I would come down. [Instead], I went to Dr. Chatterly in Cedar [City] to see what he thought. I had been to him before. He just looked at it again [and] it had been getting worse. He said, "You write and thank your friends but save your money, they can't do a thing for you."

FH: It is better to know that than to —

EG: Yes. I haven't been able to drive and I can't read.

FH: After this wonderful lifetime of experience, I think you are very well-qualified to give counsel and advice to your descendants. Maybe conclude by bearing your testimony if you would like to.

[TAPE RECORDER TURNED OFF]

EG: My [second] wife's two children [were] adopted [and] are very fine children. I think they see the example that their parents, Milton and Hazel [Moody] gave them. Milton was a fine man and Hazel is a very fine woman. [Their son Milton] is married but never had any children. [Their daughter Hazel] is married and has a fine family of four girls and a boy.

FH: [Do] you feel close to these children?

EG: Oh, yes! One thing I admire [about] them so much for is that they think so much of their mother. And she says nobody could think more of their own children than she thinks of them. If they did, I don't know how they could be any better to them than she is. A lady representing the blind came here [and] brought me a record player. I have just gone through the *Book of Mormon*, *The Doctrine and Covenants* and a wonderful life of President David O. McKay.

FH: You are getting caught up with your reading.

EG: I should say I am. It [sure] means a lot now. I have *A Marvelous Work and a Wonder* by [LeGrande] Richards that I am nearly through. This is going to mean a lot to me when I can't do other things. They are sending quite a lot of different records. I wrote to Salt Lake [City] and asked them not to send any more of that

kind; I wanted the church works. I think, as a people, we are so very, very fortunate in being members of [The] LDS [Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day-Saints] church. And having the knowledge that if we live life worthily, that we will be able to be with our families again on the other side. It means so much more to think of something that way. I can't say, like some might, that I know that is true but I can say it in my own mind. I don't have any doubt that every thing is true in our religion.

FH: [Do] you have a lot of faith in it?

EG: I sure do and I want all of my descendants to keep the faith and live lives to be worthy. I must say I am very, very proud of [my] family so far. I think they are just wonderful, every one of them.

[END OF RECORDING THREE.]

EG: Dean's three boys, none of them, have ever touched any form of liquor or tobacco or [have] done anything out of the way. Dean and Marie are both such fine parents. George and Lois have [the] girls up there. I am sorry about Mazel and his family; maybe they will get together sometime.

I thought when you started [recording] that I wouldn't have enough to justify [your time], but I have enjoyed this. I want to buy one of these records as soon as you get [finished].

FH: Alright.

[END OF RECORDING FOUR. END OF INTERVIEW.]