

**AUTOBIOGRAPHY OF WILLIAM EDWARD BUNKER**

My life's history from memory. I will not be able to give many dates.

I was born in Ogden City, Utah on January 11, 1860. I should have been born, according to my mother's story, May, 1860. She told me that I only weighed two pounds and that they put me in a quart CUD and put a lid on it. A pretty fair start. My mother said that my father came and blessed me and promised me that I should live to become a useful man in God's church.

When I was two years old my parents moved to what is the southern part of Utah. They settled in Santa Clara, Washington County, Utah. When I was about six years old my father moved my mother to Clover Valley, Nevada where the Indians were bad. I remember well one morning when my sister Elethier, older than I, took me to the bullock corral where the guard shot and killed an Indian in the night while he was trying to steal the cattle. I saw him stretched out dead. I also remember how I used to cry for flour bread and I couldn't get it.

We moved back to Santa Clara. My schooling was very limited. My father's family consisted of three wives and 26 children and it took nearly all of our time to earn a living. When I was twelve my father took me and two teams. He drove one and I drove the other. Mine consisted of one mule and one horse mare. Their names were "Lize" and "Fan". We hauled lumber from Pine Valley to Pioche, Nev., a mining camp, for about three weeks and then we drove to Ogden City, which took us two weeks. I don't just remember how long we stayed in Ogden, but we loaded merchandise for the stores in Dixie. The wagon that I drove was a narrow-tract with a "Mormon" brake which consisted of a round piece of wood reaching from one wheel to the other and a chain fixed in the center and a hole bored on one end for a lever to be placed in and a rope on the end of the lever. When you pulled on the lever it drew the wood against the wheel and served as a brake. This trip was made in 1872, so the roads were only trails.

Then I remember we had to pick cotton nearly all winter which kept us out of school so much. I went to bed many a time so my mother could patch my pants. My father hired rue out and sent me 100 miles from home when I was 1 years old. I stayed two months and talk about homesick That was my first experience. I think when I was fifteen I worked in the United Order during the summer and in the fall my father gave my mother her share of the farm. My younger brother, James, and myself (me sixteen and he fourteen) ran the farm and did all of the work. In 1877 my father, with a few other families, moved to Bunkerville, known as Mesquite Flat. Then my mother sold out in the (Santa) Clara and we went with him. I helped make the first canal in Bunkerville. (The place was afterwards Bunkerville) I lived in the United Order in that place for three years, and then it broke up.

When I was seventeen I was ordained an Elder and I went through the St. George temple and had my endowments.

I want to say this about my father's family. There were 26 children and in all of my life until I got married I never heard a cuss word from 25 of them. There was one brother that would swear when he got mad. I learned to pray while at home and I have prayed ever since. I have

always been a prayerful man. I remember I was called on to administer to a sick child when I was 18, and I have been at it ever since.

I met Sarah Vilate Burgess in the fall of 1879 and we were married on October 4, 1880 in the St. George Temple. I lived with my mother that winter and the next spring. Then I took my wife and went to Pine Valley where her folks lived and worked through the summer chopping some logs to get lumber to build me a small house on Mesquite Flat. Our first baby was born while we were in Pine Valley on August 18, 1881. We went back to Bunkerville that fall and that winter I built an adobe one room house on the Mesquite Flat and worked all winter clearing my land for crops in the spring. In the spring of 1882 I moved in my little home and oh, how happy I was with my wife and baby and little home. My crop that season was real good and after I had harvested my grain crop there came a terrible storm arid washed out all of the dams on the Virgin River and just ruined our canal and all of the people moved away from the Mesquite Flat.

I sold what I had left for a new Bain wagon and one mule. I had a sister in Richfield, Sevier County, Utah, and they wrote to me to come there, which I did. I worked for my brother-in-law the rest of that season. In the fall of 1883 I moved to Annabella as I had purchased a farm there. Annabella was about three miles southeast of Richfield. This farm proved to be very poor land and I, being poor with but very little to go on, went to freighting, mostly to Pioche, with flour and grain. It took three weeks to make the trip. Sometimes I made a little and sometimes I didn't make only expenses. Times were awful hard those days. I was the town marshal for one term and president of the Mutual for awhile.

We had four children born to us while living in Annabella. I sold out there and moved to Richfield and rented Henry Clark's farm for the summer. That winter I loaded my teams -- for I always had good teams and I took good care of them -- and took my own grain and went west for the winter to freight. I freighted from Milford to Pioche and most of the time all alone. It took me about ten days to make a trip. I remember one man was loaded for Washington, Utah, with a load of flour (small?) freight and it was real bulky and he was afraid of the road to Dixie. I told him that I would take it. He was already to start the next morning so I told him I would take his wagon and he could take mine for a trip and we did that and while I was in Dixie I went around by Gunlock as I had a sister living there, and then I got on a deal with a Mr. Hunt for his ranch. So I went back home and got my family and moved to Dixie, my native land.

I got to Dixie the third day of March, 1891. The next day after I got to the ranch there came a thaw wind and melted the snow in the mountains and a flood came and washed the dams and ditches all away. A man by the name of George Burgess owned one-third of the ranch and he came to help me fix up the darns and ditches. It was time to farm in that country. Mr. Hunt told me that it would be no use to try to buy Burgess out for he had tried time and again, but he would not sell. When Burgess came to help me I asked him if he would sell his share to me and he said, "Yes." He thought the right kind of a man had bought in. He said the reason he wouldn't sell to Hunt (was) he wanted him out of there. So I fixed up a deal with him and bought it all. I could see quite a future to this place as but very little had been done. There were apples, peaches, pears, plums and grapes growing on the ranch, and a three room log house. My brother-in-law wanted to buy in as it was too much for one man. I sold him one-half of the ranch. So we went to work and made new ditches, took in new land and fenced it. There were only eighteen acres in

the place when I bought it and when we got through taking in new land we each had forty acres.

Everything went fine for about five years. We moved to St. George winters for school. We hired a school teacher to teach our children during the summer months (Lois Earl Jones). There was another family moved in and we had a branch organized and I was set apart as Presiding Elder. My wife's brother's wife took sick and died, leaving him with six children to father and mother. Of course this made things sad on the ranch.

Let me pause right here and say, and I am very sorry to say, that I had got in the habit of drinking tea and coffee and wine as nearly all the people did in that neighborhood. I thought I would quit it for I knew that it was not right, so I would quit for a while and then start up again. Every time I quit I would feel a little stronger. I was nearly alone in the community trying to quit. If I had a little help I think it would have been so much easier for me. So I would try -- and fall down. I lived in Gunlock this winter. I was out in a crowd one day. We had all been drinking wine. The bishop came and said to me, "Will, come with me. There is a sick woman that wants us to administer to her." I didn't know just what to do. I hated to refuse. I knew there was an odor on my breath and oh, how my conscience hurt me. So I went, but I said to myself, "This will be the last time that anything like this will happen." In a few days after that, which was between Christmas and New Years, five of us went to St. George with each a load of wood for tithing. When we got to the Santa Clara we camped for the night. I won't mention names but one of the men said, "Who is going to get the wine tonight", for every cellar in town was full of it. I said, "Let's not have any wine tonight. Let's sit around the campfire and talk about something that will do us some good". And they were willing to do that - not a bad crowd but just got in that habit. So we talked about different subjects until quite late. Finally we got on the Word of Wisdom and after talking a while on the subject I said, "How many is there in this crowd will make a resolution to start New Year's morning to keep the Word of Wisdom?" I said, "I am number one." Another said, "I am number two." and another, "I am number three." and so on until all had agreed. Within thirty days all were breaking the Word of Wisdom except me. As far as tea, coffee, tobacco and strong drinks are concerned I have made good up until now and it has been 36 years ago New Year's morning, 1932, and oh, how that has helped me all along my life work. I never did get in the habit of swearing. I will admit that I did swear when I'd repeat what some vile man had said, but early in my life I repented of that for I think that is sin.

I remember one time there was a crowd of fifteen of us men went down to the sheep mountain west of Moapa, Nevada, to make lumber. There was no water there except snow. We had to melt that for our teams and for the sawmill. There were men there that kept the Word of Wisdom when they were home, and they told me that I would have to drink tea while I was using that snow water or it would have its effect on me. I said I would wait until the effect showed. Every man in the crowd drank tea except me and I think I was the healthiest man there all winter. Oh, I loved all of those things and I didn't want to break the resolution that I had made with my Father in Heaven for he had truly helped me.

The winter that Isaac's wife died I was sick for three weeks, most of that time in bed. I had a pain right through my temples and began to think it would get me. I had been bothered for years with that pain every time that I took cold, and that seemed often. The spring after I came back from the sheep mountain I put my crops in and then I hired a man to look after them and I

and my brother Alfred took my teams and went to Delamore, a mining camp, to work. On the way we stopped at a sawmill to see if we could get work there. The night just before we got there I took sick in the night and all the next day. During the day I told Alf to go to the sawmill, which was only about three or four miles away, and see if there was anyone there that held the priesthood and have them come and administer to me. There were men there that held the priesthood and had large families but they said that they had never done such a thing. I thought, Oh, you poor things. Finally Tom Gardner came along and I told him that I was very sick and for him to come and bless me, which he did. I told Alf to hitch up the teams and take me up to the sawmill. I stayed there that night and Tom Gardner was going home the next day and he took me with him and I left Alf with the teams.

It was about three days travel to home. When we got within one day's drive he stopped to camp at Huntsman's Ranch and Gardner said to him, "How is everybody?" He said "Alright, except Will Bunker's wife and she is awful sick." When I heard that I jumped out of bed to find out all of the particulars I could. He told me that the folks at home had been phoning all over the country to try to find me. I said to him, "Can you take me home tonight?" So he hitched his team on his buckboard and started. When we got on our way it was after sundown. I saw a man coming just as fast as he could on horseback. I said, "He is coming for me. I can tell the horse's gait and it is Jim's Pat horse." So when he got to us I said, "Where are you going?" He said, "After you." And I said, "How is my wife?" He said, "Some better, but awful sick". He got in with us and we got home about midnight. I found her awfully sick and I was sick. The doctor came from St. George and gave me some hopes and left medicine for me, but she only lived three days after I got home.

By this time I was feeling better, was able to be up and around but I had that awful pain in my head. It was hard for me to make myself believe that I should get well for I wanted to die too. I had never buried a child nor a father nor mother nor a brother nor sister. The worst came first and I wasn't at all prepared for such trouble. If I had been well I think I could have braced up much better. It was weeks before I could realize that I had four (five) small children to care for. I wanted to be alone and just live our lives all over again. But finally when I got so I could pray I went to my Father in Heaven for help.

That awful pain still stayed in my head and I thought, what shall I do? And the thought came to me, go down to the temple and be baptized for your health and get a blessing. So my sister Della was going to the temple to be married and I went with them and when I got there I told Brother Cannon that I was sick and what I wanted. He told the brethren to take me and make me well. So they baptized me for my health and anointed my head with holy oil and blessed me. I got right up and dressed me and applied for a name and went through the temple for a dead person, and I want to bear testimony right now that I was healed, went out of the temple a well man. I had suffered for about seventeen years with that awful pain in my head every time I took cold, and for twenty years after I was healed I never felt the first symptom of that pain. So I know the priesthood healed me and I went to the temple quite often after that.

My wife died on the sixth day of June, 1897. She was 33 years old. My mother stayed with me the rest of that summer and helped me with the children, and let me just say here that there were now eleven motherless children on the ranch. These months were real lonesome for

me. I didn't go out much for the first few months, but I studied hard and prayed hard. I read the church books through and through. I never had been much of a reader but I got interested in the Word of The Lord, and my soul hungered after truth. I fasted and I prayed for light and wisdom and for courage that I might brace up and be a man and live above my troubles. I asked the Lord to help me repent of every word, thought or deed that I had ever done that was wrong. I was trying to put Moron to the test where he said, "If any man will read it, the Book (of Mormon), with a prayerful heart and with a desire to know, the Lord would reveal it to him". So I fasted and prayed time and time again and the Lord did reveal to me that the Book of Mormon was the truth.

I began to go out and associate with my friends and attend to my church duties and the more I did the more I wanted to do and I testify that I saw joy in the midst of trouble, and I said to myself many a time, "I wonder if the Lord has accepted of my repentance, and what can I do more?" and I said, "How am I to know?" And that still small voice said to me, "Fast and pray." So I decided to do that, and I fasted and prayed all that day and that night and no word or answer came. I fasted all the second day and night and no answer. The next morning I said, "I am going to fast and pray until I get an answer."

I was living in Gunlock. My mother had taken some of my children to Annabella to her home and my brother Jim had my baby boy, Willie. So the morning of the third day's fast I got on my saddle horse and rode to my ranch. There was no one living on the ranch now, as they had moved off to school. When I got there I went into the house and kneeled down in the middle of the living room and while I was calling upon the Lord in humble prayer I heard these words, "Thou knowest that it is written that if thou wilt repent of thy sins they shall be forgiven." Then I said, "That is enough." And I knew that I had repented and I thanked the Lord for the answer and oh, how my heart swelled with joy, even until I wept. You can't imagine how happy I was over the thought that I stood before the Lord a clean man. I don't want you to think that I ever was a wicked man, for I wasn't, but I had been careless and I didn't attend to my duties as a church member. I rode back to town and ate dinner and I felt just fine.

I had planned in the fall to take my teams and go west to work. The fore part of January, 1898 I went with others down to this sheep mountain where we had been the winter before and loaded our teams with lumber. I went to Delamore, Nevada. While there I took a wood contract from a couple of Jews who were furnishing wood for the smelter there. I worked at the wood contract that winter and the next summer. I had from twenty to forty men working for me. I had quite a lot of business to do with those Jews. I remember I gave a man an order on the Jews for his money. I supposed they would hold out what he owed them for a grub bill, but he told them that I had held out the bill. I happened to go to town and they asked me about the bill. I said, "I told him to settle with you when he got to town." The Jew ran over to a saloon and brought him over and in the "jangle" the man called me a liar. Before I had time to turn around the Jew struck him and knocked him down, and when he got up the Jew said to him, "You can call me a liar, but don't you call that man a liar". So the Jew would fight for me. I stayed there for about eighteen months. I didn't make very much money on the job and I came home the forepart of June.

My wife had been dead now two years and I thought maybe I had better look around for a wife, so I went with different girls. If there is anything in this world that a man should pray over

it is his life's companion, not only for this life, but throughout all eternity. So I told the Lord that I wanted Him to help me make the choice. They call it "step" nowadays, and I "stepped" different girls. A couple of women friends said to me one day, "Would you like to get married?" I said, "Yes, if I could find the right one." They said, "We have one picked out for you. She is a fine girl, just right for you." One of them said, "Will you go with me tonight and let me make you acquainted with her?" and I said, "Yes," Now as I said before, I depended on the Lord to help me make the choice. So I went to see my selected wife and when we got to her home and they invited her to meet me I looked at her and in all of my life I never saw such a hideous face on any person. It gives me the horrors to think of it now. My stay was short there that evening and when my friend asked me what I thought about the girl I said, "I guess she is all right". But I knew that she wasn't for me. The next morning, I met her in the temple and she looked so sweet to me there, but the Lord had warned me and I accepted the warning.

I must refer back awhile. When I went to Delamore I took the Book of Mormon and our hymn book with me. I didn't have very many associates there, so I made the Book of Mormon and the hymn book my companions. I had no teacher to explain things that I didn't understand. I had but very little opportunity to learn gospel doctrine as I was away from home so much. I had been taught that God, the eternal father, and his son, Jesus Christ, were two separate persons and as I was reading the Book of Mormon I came to the fifteenth chapter of Mosiah and after reading four or five verses I said, "Well Abinadi says that they are only one God, God because of the spirit, and the Son because of the flesh. He also said in the sixteenth chapter and fifteenth verse that Christ was the very eternal father". So I began to search the Book of Mormon for proof that there was one God and not two and I had my Book of Mormon marked all through for proof that there was just one God. So I prayed about it time and time again. I had so much faith in the Book of Mormon that it was hard to change my mind. When I came home and talked to others about it they said that I was wrong and I thought, the Book of Mormon doesn't lie, so I still thought that I was right. I was just as humble as a child and trying my very best to do that which was right, and still men said I was wrong. I said to myself, I am keeping the Word of Wisdom, I am attending to my prayers and paying my tithing and I am doing my church duties the best I can and the Lord had forgiven me of my former sins and I said, why am I wrong?

I picked up the Improvement Era one day and I was reading a sermon of President Joseph F. Smith's and read where he said that God, the father, and his son, Jesus Christ, are two separate and distinct persons. Well, I was sure bothered. The modern Prophets of God said there are two, and the Book of Mormon said there is one, so which am I to believe. I had all the faith in the world in both of them, so I prayed to my Father in Heaven day after day and no answer and I just didn't know what to do. I kept thinking, who is right and who is wrong? The thought came to my mind again, why don't you fast and pray over it? So I decided that I would. I said, "The Lord heard my prayers before when I fasted and I think he will again. I fasted the first day and no answer, and the second day and night and no answer. When I wasn't on my knees praying I had a prayer in my heart to know which was right or who was wrong. The third day passed and no answer and I said, "I will fast as long as I can", for I still believed my Father would answer my prayer. So I retired to my room. I hadn't so much as taken a sip of water in those three days and nights. I went to bed prepared for the fourth day's fast. I don't know how long I had been in bed, but the next thing I knew I saw two personages before my eyes and one was above the other and oh, what beautiful men they were. I never had seen in all of my life such beauty. They looked so

much alike I couldn't tell them apart. I tried to count the waves in their beards to see if there was any difference there, but there wasn't. I said, "Which is the Father and which is the Son?" and the spirit said to me, "The Father is above the Son. So they are just alike in form and feature. When the vision, or whatever it was, passed away I was just as wide awake as I ever was in my life, and oh, the joy that filled my soul. I can't write it. I can't speak it. I was almost overcome with joy. I knew then that I had got my wires crossed and that the Prophet of God was right and the Book of Mormon was right and I was wrong. It pays some times to make mistakes. What my eyes have seen and what my ears have heard is worth more to me than all of the material things in the world. I love to read Abinadi. Now it is all plain to me. So, my children, if you will go before the Lord with a broken heart and a contrite spirit, ask in faith, nothing wavering, you shall receive.

A short time after this I went down to the Beaver Dam. I had a brother making a farm there and I wasn't very busy so I thought I would visit him for a while. It was only about one and one-half miles over the hill to Littlefield, a small town in Arizona. The next Sunday was fast day and we all went over to meeting. There were five or six young women in the town. In fast meeting one of them got up and bore her testimony. I said to my brother, "There is faith there". I learned after meeting that she was single, and I was interested in her. I stayed and helped my brother for a while and got more acquainted with Miss Iverson. The next thing I knew I was in love with her and in a short time I proposed to her and she said, "I will give you the answer in a few days." She knew I had a family of children and it was taking a heavy responsibility to marry me. So she fasted and prayed and I fasted and prayed and her father joined us in the fast and when she gave me the word yes I knew there was no mistake made and we got married February 6, 1900. We moved to my ranch that spring.

I sent my oldest son, Edward, to Annabella for my children. My oldest daughter, Elethier, had got married. The children came and they had a good home to come to. Emma made them welcome and took the very best care of them.

In due time a baby girl came to our home (Sadie Theresa, born May 21, 1901) but she only lived a few days. That winter we moved to St. George to school and I burned charcoal for the smelter in St. George.

My son Owen was in . . . . (Owen Woodruff born September 22, 1902)

Everything went well for awhile. Another boy baby came, Clark Iverson (born August 12, 190). When he was about seventeen months old he took the croup. I was away from home at the time working on the ( . . . ) (Acuma ?) road. My wife sent for me as he was very low. I rode as fast as I could, changed horses on the way, but he died just a few moments before I got home. He was such a large, fine baby. Our home was made so sad. It was so hard on Emma. As I had left my two teams out on the road I was compelled to go look after them.

I was appointed assistant superintendent of the Sunday School in Gunlock, which I held until I left there.

My ranch was a fine place. We had all kinds of fruit and everything grew fine there, but it

was a ranch six miles from town and a bad road to travel over and the thoughts of me living so far away from nowhere grew on me, deprived of the social side of life and so far from church and school. So I began to get uneasy and dissatisfied, Money was hard to get and I had to be away from home so much on the freight road.

I am reminded now of a circumstance that happened to me. There was a bunch of us freighters loaded with copper bullion for the railroad. We camped for Sunday at my ranch and the grass being good I turned my horses out, four head. When I went to get them I found them, all but one, and I rode the range I thought everywhere. The rest of the crowd was ready to go. I didn't want to make the trip alone. I looked everywhere I thought the horse was and I couldn't find him. I had to have that horse or not go. There was no horse to hire anywhere near. I was still looking but no place. I was about to give up and the thought came to me, why don't you pray about it? So I went over under a cedar tree and knelt down and I told the Lord that I had done my best to find that horse and that it was now up to Him to show me where that horse was. After I got through praying I led my horse and walked about fifty steps. The rocks were so thick I could hardly see a horse's track. My horse was shod and the range horses were bare footed, so I was looking for tracks, and as I said, I went about fifty steps from the cedar tree and I saw about half of a shod horse's track and I picked my way through the rocks until I found the way the tracks were going. So I got on my horse and rode not over 200 yards on the brow of a little hill and there stood my horse. I found him in less than twenty minutes after I had prayed, and I went with the crowd.

I was still discontented. I wanted to go and didn't want to go. I knew I had a good place for that country. I often told the Lord that if it was right for me to stay there that a contented spirit would come to me, and if it was right for me to leave that the way would be opened for me to leave. It may seem strange to the reader that I always prayed over all of my affairs. I knew that I didn't have money to buy a ready-made, and if I sold out I wouldn't get much for my ranch for there wasn't anyone there that had much money, so I told the Lord if I left that he would lead me to a new country among new people. I didn't know where that would be.

In the spring of 1906 Oz Gardner came to my place and he said he had traveled all over to Oregon and Idaho and came back to what they called Melville, in Millard County, and he told me about that country.

I must refer to a circumstance now before I forget it. I went to Panguitch after lumber, and I went alone. This was before Emma and I were married, just a while before. When I got ready to come home with my lumber there was a man by the name of Henry Lasser that was going to St. George with a load of potatoes, so we planned to go together, but for some cause or other he got ahead of me and I didn't catch up with him that night, so we both camped alone. But I caught up with him the next day at noon while he was having his dinner. So then we traveled together. When night came and we got our supper ready to eat I said, "Brother Lasser, if it is all right with you we will have a blessing and attend to our prayers while we are together." I said to him, "I have always made it a practice to attend to my prayers away from, as well as at home." He said, "Sure, that will be just fine." So we had the blessing and our prayers that night and the next morning, and during the day he told me the difficulty he was in. He said, "I have bought a piece of land and the payment is past due and I have got to get enough money out of the spuds to

make the payment or I will lose the land, so when we pray let us pray for my success.” So we did that and he said to me, “Brother Bunker, I am getting to be quite an old man and I have traveled with Bishops and men holding high offices in the church, but this is the first time in my life that I have ever heard a man pray on the road.”

When we got to Cedar City the roads parted, one to St. George and the other through Pinto to my ranch. So when we got to the forks of the roads we stopped and he said to me, “Can I get to St. George on the road you go?” I said, “Yes, but it is farther and a worse road,” He said, “I don’t care for that. I have never in my life taken as much pleasure on a trip as I have while I have been with you and I want to go as far as I can with you, and I know it is our prayers that have made it so pleasant.” So we started through the mountains and he seemed to worry some as to whether he would get the necessary money out of those spuds.

When we got to Dan Page’s ranch we camped for the night. I was acquainted with Mr. Page, and he said, “Where is your partner going?” I said, “To St. George with a load of spuds.” So I introduced them. Mr. Page said to him, “Would you like a job?” and he said, “Yes”. “Well I will send the boss out to talk to you.” So the boss came out and said to him, “Can you cook?” And he said, “Yes, but not much on the pie and cake,” So the boss said, “I will give you \$2.50 per day and board to cook for nine men and I will keep you for three months.” Brother Lasser said, “What will I do with my team and spuds?” He said, “I will buy half of your load of spuds and you can store the rest of them here in Page’s cellar, and I will take your team out to the mine and I will feed them and have them there to haul wood and water to the mine.” Brother Lasser was one of the happiest men you ever saw, and he said it all happened because the Lord had heard our prayers. So reader, it pays to pray on the road.

As I said before, Oz Gardner came and told me about Melville, I figured I would go and see the place in the fall, but in the early summer a stallion kicked me on the arm and broke one bone in my arm, so I was unable to work and thought, this is a good time to go and look at Melville. So I prepared for the trip. Elida had just lost her husband. She said she would like to go with me, said she would help me pay the expense of the trip. When we got to Fillmore we stopped at Richard Ashby’s home and talked to him about Melville. He said to me, “If you will go and see Brother T. C. Callister, he is interested down there, he can tell you all about that place.” So I went and I found Brother Callister at home. He told me all about the land and reservoir. I said to him, “You have told me about the land and water, now I would like to know what kind of a class of people have you there?” He said, “I think ninety percent of them are Mormon people.” I said, “That is all right.” There was no one living there but that was the kind that had bought land. The next day we drove to Oasis and camped at Tom Reed’s. They said we could camp out in the street, that they didn’t have any room inside for us. We had our own supplies with us. I went in and asked Mrs. Reed to sell us some milk and while there she asked me if I were a Mormon. I said, “Yes, dyed clear through.” And then she had all kinds of room for us and was just like a sister to us, and when her husband came home I surely learned that I had found a friend, and have been ever since.

The next day I went in search of Samuel Bennett as he was looking after the Melville land. I found him and he took me over the project. It didn’t look good to me. I thought, what a barren waste. Our buggy didn’t make tracks enough so’s we could follow it back and I didn’t see

a thing that looked inviting to me. All of the land close in was sold. Brother Bennett tried to encourage me the best he could. I had a queer feeling come over me as we looked over the country and when I got back to Brother Reed's Tom's father said to me, "Well, Brother Bunker, what have you seen and how do you feel?" I said to him, "I haven't seen a thing all day, but I feel like I have been traveling over sacred ground all day." And then I said to myself, this is the country that you have been praying about, a new country, a new people, where I can help kill the snakes, make the canals, build the bridges and help to erect meeting houses and school houses and a new town.

We took the train from Oasis to Salt Lake, as my mother and sister were living there. We visited them a few days and returned to Oasis. Brother Reed had kept my team.

We went to Holden and stayed with Brother Bennett over Sunday, went to Sunday School and Meeting with him, and I was called on to speak in meeting. I made arrangements with Brother Bennett for 160 acres of land and water. The land was away out in Section 16.

We got home all OK and began to arrange my affairs to go back to Melville in the fall to work on the canal. During the winter I moved my family to Littlefield to stay with Emma's mother for the winter. I took Willie with me as we were going to work. We hauled a few loads of wood to St. George before starting to Melville. In Dixie we didn't get our fall work done until about the first of December, and when we got ready to start to Melville it set in storming and the snow was so deep in the Mountain Meadows that we couldn't get through. I went to Littlefield and got my family and decided to wait until spring. During the winter I got on a deal with John Bowler and he bought me out. He gave some cash, some horses and some cattle and the rest I gave him time on, which he paid in later years in produce.

In February, about the 18th, we left the ranch for Melville. Oh the snow and water and mud that we had to contend with on our way, was on the road for twelve days, got into Deseret March 3. The fields were green and people were pasturing them. I thought I had got into another Dixie. Brother Bennett had told me in a letter that hay was awfully scarce in the Deseret country and said that he could get me some in Holden for \$12 er ton. I sent him the money to buy me eight tons. As soon as we got to Deseret I went to find my friends, the Reeds. Tom helped me locate a house in Oasis. My wife fell in love with Sister Reed and has ever remained that way. After looking around I found that I could buy hay as cheap in Oasis as I paid in Holden, so I asked Brother Bennett to sell the hay that I had bought there, which he did.

I went and got me a job on the canal. I had two good teams and a good boy to drive one of them. We only worked a few days when Brother Fred Lyman came along and said that teams were wanted on the dam and would pay cash. I asked him if I could leave that job and do it later. He said, "Yes." So I went home and got ready for the work on the Big Dam. When I got to the darn I went to see the boss, Mr. Brinton. I asked him if I could get on with two teams. He said, "What kind of teams have you? I don't want any more jerk-water teams. I have got too many of them now." I said, "I think my teams are an average with what I can see." He said, "Well, come on. I will try you." He put my smaller team on a scraper to load wagons and the larger team to haul dirt. As my team was large I nearly always took one more scraper full than the other teams and it was difficult for me to get under some of the pits. There was a boss to tell you where to go

to load. I told Mr. Brinton that it was hard to get under some of the pits and he said to me, "Go wherever you want to and unload wherever you want. Don't pay any attention to any boss." I guess he told the boss that for they said nothing to me and when payday came he paid me 25 a day more for my 1ae team than the other teams. One rainy day we were all laying off and the boys got up a purse for the best puller out of about 200 head of horses, The boys talked me into letting one of mine pull, which I did, and won the purse.

There was some Holden men that had, a saw mill out in the Deep Creek mountains and they got after me to go out there with them, said I could make as much again as I was making then. They wanted to null logs to the mill and they pictured it so nice to me with my large team. My brother-in-law came out from Dixie and he was quite a timber man and he wanted to go so I left the dam and went to log. I took my wife and babies and tent. When we got to the mill we fixed up our logging carts and went after logs and oh, how disappointed we were: The timber was up on the mountain and the mountain was so steep that we couldn't get our horses to pull them down, and it wasn't steep enough to slide them, so we worked, skidded and hauled them while our teams were standing watching us work. I said to my partner, "We can't make our salt here." So they paid us for what logs we had put in and we came back to Deep Creek, took a small job of hauling some hay that was in a stack a few miles away.

I took sick while in Deep Creek. I was real sick for a few days. When I got better we started back to Oasis, but when we got to Callao a man by the name of Curney wanted us to put up his hay crop. We took the contract at \$2.25 per ton to cut, rake and haul. He had about 200 tons of alfalfa hay. We did well on that job as the hay was first class. We got back to Oasis some time in July. I worked in the hay fields there for some time. I went and finished my job that I had taken on at the Melville canal and then I went to work on the spill and dam. I worked there that fall and winter and left my teams with Willie. In the fall Emma, Amanda and myself went to Dixie to put up our fruit for the next season.

In the spring I leased Peter Black's farm at Abraham. I raised a good crop. During the summer I hired a man to help Willie haul the brick for the district school in Hinckley from W. N. Gardner and Hickman Brick Kiln. I hauled that brick for brick to build my home in Melville.

We joined the Oasis ward when we first got there and I want to say this for the people of Oasis that I never was treated with more courtesy and kindness in my life than the people of Oasis treated us. We learned to love them.

During the summer while we lived in Abraham we attended Sunday School and Meeting in Oasis. Some time in the summer we learned that there was going to be a Sunday School organized in Melville on Sunday. So I said to my wife, "Let's go and see who they put in." It was a branch of the Hinckley ward. We intended to make it our home so we went up to the organization and they, the Stake officers, put me in as superintendent. After that we traveled from Abraham to Melville for Sunday School. Levi McCullough and Joseph Callister were my counselors.

I would like to write the history of Delta, but it is so hard for me to write and that would be a big job now.

After I got my crops gathered in the fall I moved my family to Melville and we lived in a tent while Brother Gardner, Wm. N. Gardner's father, laid up the house. When the carpenters and plasterers got through we moved in. The house was of brick with four rooms, pantry, clothes closet, three porches and basement (large hallway, later a bath). I built me a stable for my horses. My house was the second house built of any importance. There was one log room and one lumber shack on the town site. I had a well drove and I put in a cistern of concrete 36 feet deep. It seems to me that I furnished all of my neighbors, as they came in, with water for years.

As I said before, my land was away out on the farther side of the project and didn't suit me at all and I was awfully discouraged with it. It didn't look good to me at all. I said, "I came here to make my home and help make a new country and have built one of the first homes on the town site." I thought I had the poorest piece of land on the project, which turned out to be true, and I said to the Lord, "I am here, ready to do my part, and if I can't get a better piece of land than that which I have here I will leave here." And I asked him to help me in my efforts. In a short time the Steeles came and wanted to buy land. I took them out to see my land. They said it looked good to them. We hadn't got the water out yet so we just didn't know what any of the land would do, so I sold it to them. I had told the Lord that if I couldn't get something that looked better I would leave. So I started out depending on the Lord to help me.

I heard that Mahonri Bishop had a forty down by the river that he wanted to sell. I got on my horse and rode to Hinckley to see him. He said, "I have just sold it". In a few days I met Delbert Searle and he said to me, "Say, Fred Cottrell has bought forty acres of my land and he wants to squawk (sp). Don't you want to take it off his hands'?" And I said, "Yes." I went and looked it over. It was joining (his) farm and it looked good to me. So I bought it and I have thanked the Lord ever since for I think it has proven to be one of the choicest little farms in this large valley. So the Lord heard my prayer again.

People had begun to come. There were enough now to organize a ward. H. E. Maxfield was chosen as Bishop with Edgar W. Jeffery as his first counselor and me as his second. In a few months I was released from the Sunday-School. I was chosen to act on the Melville Irrigation Board for some time and later on the Town Board.

A baby boy (Lee Kendell) came to our home the spring after we moved in our new home (April 7, 1909). We was a large, fine boy, took the prize at the baby show when he was fourteen months old. When he died (August 24, 1910) leaving the family broken hearted, and what made it seem worse, he was the first death in the new ward, and the first one to be buried in the new grave yard. We could stand in our door and listen to the wolves howl, we thought over his little grave up there all alone. That was awful to his mother. It makes me shed tears now when I write about it. We tried to acknowledge the hand of the Lord in his death and make the best of it, but oh, we were so lonesome without our baby boy.

We finally got the water in the new canal and put in some crops. We had just commenced to irrigate our crops when out went our dam. The dam was a large one and it took some weeks to build it up, but we finally got the water back in the canal, but it didn't stay in long until the cement spillway went out, which left us high and dry for another year and losing all of our hard

work of putting in our crops and building our dams and spillway. So we went up the river four miles and took the water out on gravity, which we should have done in the first place. It would have saved us about \$100,000. But when we got the water back in the canal in the spring our dam troubles have been over for twenty three years.

My little farm proved to be a good one. My first crop of wheat went fifty bushels per acre, and in later years I planted eight acres of sugar beets, which averaged twenty-one tons per acre. I helped move our first school house from Hinckley and later helped build what we called the "Ward Hall", as we used it for all purposes. In 1918 I built a house on the said farm, consisting of five rooms. It was a frame building. We rented our home in town and moved on the farm, lived there for a number of years. When I went to work for the Utah Idaho Sugar Co. as a field man we moved back to town. I worked for them four years. The White Fly and drought came along and ruined our sugar beet business and the sugar factory was moved away. I sent Owen on a mission for two years and he came home a credit to me. He is now filling the second term as County Treasurer. He is also second counselor to the Bishop of the First Ward in Fillmore. Edward was in the bishopric in the McCornick (ward) until the people all moved away on account of the drought. William L. is a counselor in the Elder's Quorum in Sutherland. All of these things make me happy. At this writing Elethier lives in the Uintah Basin, Eddie in Springville, Elida in Delta, Amanda in Deseret, Grace in Salt Lake City. Dorothy is taking a nurses course in the L. D. S. Hospital. Jetta is home working in the bank.

I labored as Bishop Maxfield's second counselor for about ten years when Brother Jeffery was called on a mission to England and I was set apart as first counselor and Henry Schlappi as second. I worked in that capacity the remainder of my time, making fifteen years in the bishopric, and I want to say here that it all was a pleasure to me and a wonderful experience. The Delta ward was divided and made into two wards. The new officers appointed were E. W. Jeffery, Bishop of the First Ward and E. L. Lyman, Bishop of the Second Ward. I was appointed chairman of the genealogical committee of the Second Ward and served there for five years when I moved back to the farm.

I am a little ahead of my story. April 19, 1929 I took sick, as I had been bothered with prostration (prostate trouble) for about thirteen years. It finally got to the point where an operation was necessary. I took very sick and was rushed to the hospital in Salt Lake City. The doctor kept me there for about ten days, doping me up for the operation. I was to be operated on Monday morning. I sent for President Ivins and President Hinckley to come and bless me before the operation. They gave me a wonderful blessing and I felt sure that I would get well. The operation was performed successfully and I want to testify that outside of about two hours pain, and that was when I was about ready to leave the hospital, that I never lost a meal of victuals nor a night's sleep and wasn't sick at all. So the Lord did surely bless me.

I must relate another circumstance that happened to me. The reader may think that it is child-like, but I guess I have always been kind of child-like. One fall I had about one half acre of tomatoes and the vines grew very large. In the fall I was afraid of frost, so I hauled straw and covered the vines over. Later on when the tomatoes began to get ripe I would uncover a vine and pick the ripe ones and cover it again. One day, as I was picking, I lost my watch and as the vines were all covered with straw it was like looking for a needle in a haystack. So me and my hired

man and his family we searched and we searched. We pulled up the vines wherever we thought we had been. We took the garden rake and raked the straw away. We searched all afternoon. It was a valuable watch and I felt so bad about losing it. We finally gave it up. As I was going away from the field the thought came to me, why don't you pray about it? So I went alone and I told the Lord that I had carried that watch for eighteen years, and that I had done everything we could to find it and had failed, so I asked him to lead me to the place where the watch was. When I got through praying I went out in the tomato patch, went about one-third of the way down the patch without looking under a vine. All at once it seemed like something said, "Look here." I cleaned the straw away and there lay my watch, and I am sure that it wasn't over five minutes after I prayed until I had my watch in my hand and I still have it. And I expect to have it as long as I live. So I am just child enough to believe that the Lord heard my prayer.

In the year of 1919, on the seventh of December, a baby girl, Wilma, was born. She was always frail and delicate. She stayed with us until she was twenty-three months and then we had to part with her and she joined her brothers and sister that had gone before, leaving Emma four here and four over there. I have my two babies, my mother, one son-in-law, one daughter-in-law and three grand babies in the Delta grave yard and one grandson in the Deseret grave yard, all since I came here up to this writing.

Now in conclusion I want to say for the benefit of my posterity that I have seen the sick healed, the lame to walk and the blind to receive their sight through the power of the priesthood, and I have often said to myself, "These things have only been small things to me compared with that still small voice that has whispered so much peace and joy to my soul." I don't believe this gospel is true, but I know it. The Lord has revealed it to me, and I know of why I speak.

Yours respectfully,

Wm. E. Bunker

P. S. This isn't worded very good, nor written, but it is the truth just the same.

Written in 1931.