

A TALK GIVEN BY KIM BULLOCK AT THE FUNERAL OF DERAL WEST

23 MAY 1989

I extend my thanks to the West family for allowing me the opportunity to give the biography of such a noble man, my father-in-law and friend. I appreciate that and the opportunity spend this time at the podium.

Deral Reid West as he was known on the public records and the records of the Church. Affectionately known by his contemporaries as Lefty West. Respectfully known by the family that love him as Dad West, and intimately known by his wife June as sweetheart.

Deral Reid West, born, Sunday, May 25th, 1913 in the family home in Raymond, Alberta, the third of eleven children. His father Curtis Andrew West, his mother Iona Larson West.

His early childhood was much like the childhood of all the people born during that era. The economy wasn't as buoyant as it is now. Everybody was obliged to work and pitch in for the sustenance of the family. Deral West was no stranger to hard work. As we had occasion to have him in our home many days, I perhaps know him as well as most people and he shared his life with our family. We spent many hours in meaningful conversation and he told me much about his life, so perhaps it is appropriate that I share some of these stories with you.

When he was in his early teens he was obliged to go out and work as a man. And working as a man involved using horses because that was the means of power in those days and he used mules as well. He told our family, and in particular me, a few horror stories about working with those horses. One day he was asked to take a wagon and pick up a load of beet tailings and he had a pair of mules and he was satisfied that this pair of mules would not have sufficient power to pull this heavy load so he thought he would go to the Larson place and get another pair of mules to supplement the power that he already had. He went to the Larson place and picked up the other pair of mules. They hadn't been used much and from some of the stories he told me I'm not sure all these animals were even broke. So he put the Larson mules on the wheel and he put his mules on the lead. He thought they might be easier to control that way, Well the mules were not familiar with one another and the Larson mules had not been used much and they were very full of life and anxious to go. They began jumping around, getting all worked up and in the meantime got the mules worked up on the lead. I imagine Deral weighed about 110 lbs at that time, he wasn't very big. These mules got out of control and he began to have a western event. They headed down the trail just as hard as they could go. Well this trail went all out around the end of the lake, but these mules reasoned that a straight line was faster to travel than going around a curve. So they headed right for the water. He was busy looking out for his life, so he let them go. Well, they dove into the lake head first and after a few minutes they emerged on the other side which lends further credence to the theory that if you go fast enough across water you can stay on top. Both the mules, the harness, the wagon and Deral were heavily laden with mud when they got out on the other side. It was about 10:00 o'clock that night, he told me, when he got home. About the only part of him that his mother and father could see were his eyes and his teeth, but they were glad to see him.

Another event that was even more hazardous than that was when he had six heavy horses on a set of discs. Many of you young people probably can't even imagine this, but he rode on a seat on the front

section of discs, and again I'm not certain if these horses were ever broke. He was making his rounds around the field discing up these clods and as he neared the house a turkey gobbled. Can you imagine anything more terrifying than a turkey gobbling? These horses immediately broke loose and away and he had another western event. He was hanging on for his life and soon the disc went over a big bump and flipped him off his seat and he landed on the eveners, that is an oak timber down on the front of the disc and the horses are hooked to it. Well the reigns kept him from falling over backwards and the speed of travel kept him from going forward so he was able to straddle that oak beam down there and stay on but his feet got drug back and it cut slices in the soles of his shoes from the disc. Some pretty hazardous experiences and he shared many of these with us.

Deral was very good in school and many years ago Lyman Jacobs confided in my parents and they said Deral West was one of the best students that went through the Raymond High School.

In 1933, June Hall went to Raymond to stay with Prices and it was then that Deral became acquainted with June, courted her, and subsequently married her on Friday, December 22nd, 1933, on a very stormy day. The results of this union were five children. The oldest Darselle, who is married to myself Kim Bullock and we live on the west side of Lethbridge. Second oldest, LaRita Ann, married to Don Attwood and they live in Kelowna, BC. Third oldest is Richard Reid, married to Faye Doyle, living in Edmonton. Fourth oldest is Sandra Lynn, married to Allan Radke, living in Surrey, BC. And fifth oldest was Mark Deral married to Annette Cattoi and they live in Coalhurst.

They have twenty grandchildren and nineteen great-grandchildren. His experiences in early marriage were similar, as there wasn't that much employment opportunities in those days, he thought he had to go to work for a farmer. But farmers in those days were not doing very well and all he could make was a dollar or a dollar and a quarter a day which wasn't sufficient to provide for himself and his wife. It was then that he decided he wouldn't work for farmers anymore, not that he had exception to them but because he knew that they were having difficulty providing for themselves without hiring help and paying them what they would really need to get by on. So after that he went to work for the Town of Raymond, digging sewer and water trenches. He did most of his work by contract, in other words, for how many feet of trench he dug he got so many dollars. He worked for another man doing custom baling and he made two dollars to two dollars and fifty cents a day doing this. In 1934 he was fortunate enough to get on the sugar factory campaign which was a three to four month campaign making sugar out of the beets that are grown around Raymond. A few years subsequent to that he was able to get on steady. He also helped build the Chief Mountain Highway, immediately east of Waterton Park, and it was a blessing to him because they gave him some horses on that job that were at least partly broke. He met Dave Watson who he considered an excellent carpenter and he learned the carpenter trade from Dave and he and Dave did some constructing and he carried on with that the rest of his life. He built a home that they had in Raymond even though it was extremely difficult to come up with the money to build the home and they had to do it a bit at a time and they also built their home in Picture Butte when they moved there and helped many other people doing their carpentry chores.

In 1939 the second world war broke out. At first there wasn't conscription, but the men that were of age found out around 1944 that the Canadian Government was going to conscript the able bodied men into the army, but if they would volunteer for service they would possibly have their choice to go into the navy or the air force. Deral West volunteered for the navy in 1944. He took his basic training in Lethbridge and Winnipeg and then was moved on to Cornwallis and then Halifax, Nova Scotia. His first

tour of duty in Halifax was to work in a little house on a jetty – a jetty is a pier or something that protrudes into the bay. In this little house he was supposed to look through a telescope and watch the allied ships as they came into harbour and he was supposed to check the degaussing cable which is a cable that circumnavigated the ship to make it anti-magnetic so it wouldn't attract mines. Accompanying him in this house was another man that was to help him observe, and a cook and he was the leading hand cook. A very good one. The only person that was really busy there was the cook. While Dad was there he put on quite a lot of weight. One of his best friends, Glen Bullock, my oldest brother, was also stationed in Halifax with the navy and he got a few days leave one day and wanted to look up his old mate Lefty. So he went to call on him in the little house and when Glen went into that house it was several seconds before Deral recognized him because he had put on so much weight it was difficult to open his eyes. He was then transferred from this little house to an expropriated run runner that was a patrol boat, with a German cylinder diesel engine in it and they patrolled the Canadian waters hoping to engage the enemy or maybe hoping not to engage the enemy. Twenty-one men on board and Deral was the diesel mechanic with very little training on a foreign engine so you could imagine the results that might have occurred if they had engaged the enemy. After that a German submarine came into Halifax harbour and gave themselves up and he was part of the maintenance crew on that submarine to preserve it so as to be able to study it and perhaps learn a few things about the German navy.

As he received his leave he didn't usually catch the train directly home. Navy, army and air force paid the men that were in the services very little, and if I remember correctly, they sent the money directly to their wives or at least part of it. So on his way home he stopped and stoked grain, again contract, to pick up extra money.

In 1959 he became interest in and very active in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints and he embraced the Gospel of Jesus Christ and at the same time he got interested in community service and he was on the town council of Raymond under three different mayors. He became active in community and church. In 1963 they were obliged to move to Picture Butte because they were going to discontinue operations at the Raymond sugar factory. He moved over here and built the home that I mentioned earlier in the biography. Very comfortable and modern and we spent many hours visiting with our mother and father-in-law and enjoyed being there.

At this time the family has asked me to extend thanks to the Picture Butte Ward for the hand of friendship they extended to the West family when they came to Picture Butte and in particular during the last nineteen years when they had more difficulties. All the help and friendship that has been extended from you is appreciated forever.

Deral and June were always most interested in family activities. Supported all of us children in the various and important events that took place in our family.

They were on their way to Eastern Canada to visit some of their children in July of 1970 and there was an event that took place there that significantly changed their life.

A few miles east of Dickinson, North Dakota, they were involved in a serious automobile accident. In the automobile were June and Deral, Aunt Dean Burbank, and our daughter Shauna. Shauna faired the best as she was young and agile; she got skinned and bruised. June and Dean were injured a little more

extensively with quite bad bruises, scrapes and bumps. Deral was very seriously injured. His kidneys had quit working, it had severed his spinal column so that he was paralyzed from the waist down. He had a rupture and many other bad bruises.

Our family was on the way to a family camping trip right when that happened. We were just parked outside the shop for a last check before leaving town. The telephone rang and we were advised of this disaster that took place there. We went back home and unloaded our camping gear and prepared to go to Dickinson to see what assistance we could lend.

My wife and I and our second oldest son Brian, who assisted in driving and helped out with errands, motored from Lethbridge to Dickinson, drove straight through, to attend to the well being of our loved ones that were in Dickinson. Most of the time that I was there, Dad West, as I affectionately call him, was unconscious. He did regain consciousness twice while I was in his presence and the first time I asked him about things he said, "Well this is an awful mess boy". That was the most negative remark I ever heard from him. I did what I could and I came back home on the bus and left my wife, and other members of her family that went down to help out, in charge. After they thought it was safe to move him, Faye Doyle's mother and father, who were very kind and owned an airplane, volunteered to fly down to Dickinson and bring him the most convenient way to Lethbridge.

When he got back to Lethbridge he was admitted to the hospital and, subsequent to that, the auxiliary hospital and his rehabilitation began. If I remember correctly he entered the hospital in July or August and he was released in January of 1971. It was at this time he began to fight back. After he got out of the hospital he got an automobile and had hand controls installed in it to give him mobility. Of course he had to get a wheelchair. He arranged to get an elevator that would get him out of his house. He started to build up his strength in his hands and arms so that he could get himself around and he resumed his activity in the church, filling positions as teacher, agent to church publications, and with the assistance of their dear friends in the ward they were able to attend the Temple sometimes, and many others that I have probably forgotten about. They continued in their support of the family; travelled to all family functions; made a contribution to mankind, the community and the church. Again at this time the family has asked me to thank Dr Joe Takahashi and his good wife May for their professional services and personal kindnesses that were rendered over the last nineteen years that helped ease the burden that they had.

As I said earlier in the biography, he spent many nights at our home. We looked forward to him coming; whenever June was ill or she needed a break from her heavy labours of looking after him, we invited him to come to our place.

We had many meaningful conversations. I anxiously looked forward for work to end so I could go home and visit with him. When I got home I didn't get much done. I spent most of the time at the house talking to him. One time he was sitting at the table with us and my wife Darselle said, "could you give us some advice on how to improve our financial situation?" He loved to do that for his family. He said, "It's simple: buy low and sell high." That was a contradiction to the way he did business, he bought low and sold lower.

He went through perhaps five automobiles in the course of when he was an invalid. When he got to where he couldn't completely trust one car he would look for another one. The one he disposed of was

always in good condition, very few dents and marks and he kept them up. In as much as I am in the automobile business he would say, "Boy, do you think you could sell my old car?" I'd say, "Sure, how much do you want for it?" "Oh, \$250 - \$300." I would say, "That car is easily worth \$800 or \$1000." "No, that is all I want", he'd say. "If something ever happened to it, I wouldn't feel like I cheated anybody." I never knew a more completely honest man. Somebody that would stay up half the night to make sure he didn't cheat the tax department.

Those who knew him well know that he whistled through his teeth – I called it a nervous whistle. I'm not sure. He stayed in the bedroom at our house and when he suspected that dinner was nearly on he would start to dress and immediately start to whistle and it rarely was a tune, at least not one I ever heard. One time I said to my wife, "I want just once for him to come out without whistling, just once." Not that the whistling bothered me, not at all, I just didn't like him to be so predictable, but he always whistled.

He liked hockey. He didn't have the opportunity for recreation like most of us that had more mobility, so he watched a lot of hockey games. I can take them or leave them, but this one day he said, "Well boy, let's turn the game on should we." I said, "all right." I just got interested; it was a tie game and somebody about to score and snap, off went the television. I said, "What are you doing Dad?" He said, "I'm getting too worked up, can't watch this any longer."

Since most of our children left home, we had two extra bedrooms and I said to Dad, "Now you can have any bedroom you want." Our grandson Jared, who lived with us, said, "No, no, Grandpa sleeps in my room; I want him in my room!" So I said to Jared, "Doesn't that bother you with Grandpa in your room?" "Oh no, no, that doesn't bother me – Grandpa rules." I think that is the modern day expression for "Grandpa is the greatest". Grandpa West wants to thank Jared for that special consideration, and they got to be good friends.

In my life I have heard and read several testimonies. Some of them stay with you; one that stays with me is in Section 76 of the Doctrine and Covenants where Joseph Smith and Sidney Rigdon had received a revelation on the three degrees of glory and says "and now, after all the testimonies that have been given of him, this is the testimony, last of all, which we give of him: That he lives!" Such a simple and profound testimony. There is another testimony that I will attempt to read. It is written in Dad West's Journal; there are a few lines here:

As I look out the window and see the wonders of this creation my spirit speaks to me, the natural man, my testimony of the truthfulness of the gospel as contained in the standard works of the Church, wells up within me. I know that I will stand before the judgement bar of God and have the opportunity of seeing my parents and ancestors. Also I will be able to see and welcome my family and their families in the way of the gospel, which allows me to be a Patriarch to my family in that great plan of salvation.

That testimony was written for his family. No greater legacy could they receive than that testimony.

A few years ago my oldest daughter Sheila and I were looking in the scriptures and we were in Section 35 of the D & C. In that section it tells about miracles and she asked my opinion of that this section meant. We spent some time thinking about it and doing cross-referencing and after we looked back a little ways and it says in verse 7, "And it shall come to pass that there shall be a great work in the land, even among the gentiles. Brothers and sisters this is missionary work, For I am God and mine arm is not

shortened and I will show many miracles." And it goes on to tell about the miracles; the miracles of the blind being able to see, the deaf being able to hear, the dumb being able to speak, and the lame being able to walk. But under close examination of this scripture it does not mean that in the literal sense of the word, not that it cannot be accomplished through the power of the priesthood by those of sufficient faith. But that is not the intent in Section 35 because it means here that the blind not only will be able to see, but to see the light. The deaf not only to hear, but to hear the hear the truth. The dumb not only to speak, but to speak the work of God, and the lame not only to walk, but to walk uprightly. I am sure both of us thought of Dad West and Grandpa West when we read that scripture because his eyes saw the light, his ear heard the truth, his mouth spoke the word, and while for the last nineteen years of his life he didn't literally walk, he walked uprightly, he walked with God. I pray we will take advantage of this good man's life. That his friends and family will remember him this day and remember him forever; that the good works that he did will not be in vain; that we will benefit from the sacrifices that he made. If you remember the scripture in Section 121 of the Doctrine and Covenants when the lord speaks to Joseph Smith and says, "Endure well to the end." That's what June and Lefty did; they endured the circumstances and they made the best of them.

I pray that the Spirit of the Lord will attend with you people and with the West family and with me, in revering and remembering this good man, his testimony, and what he stood for. I leave these thoughts with you in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.