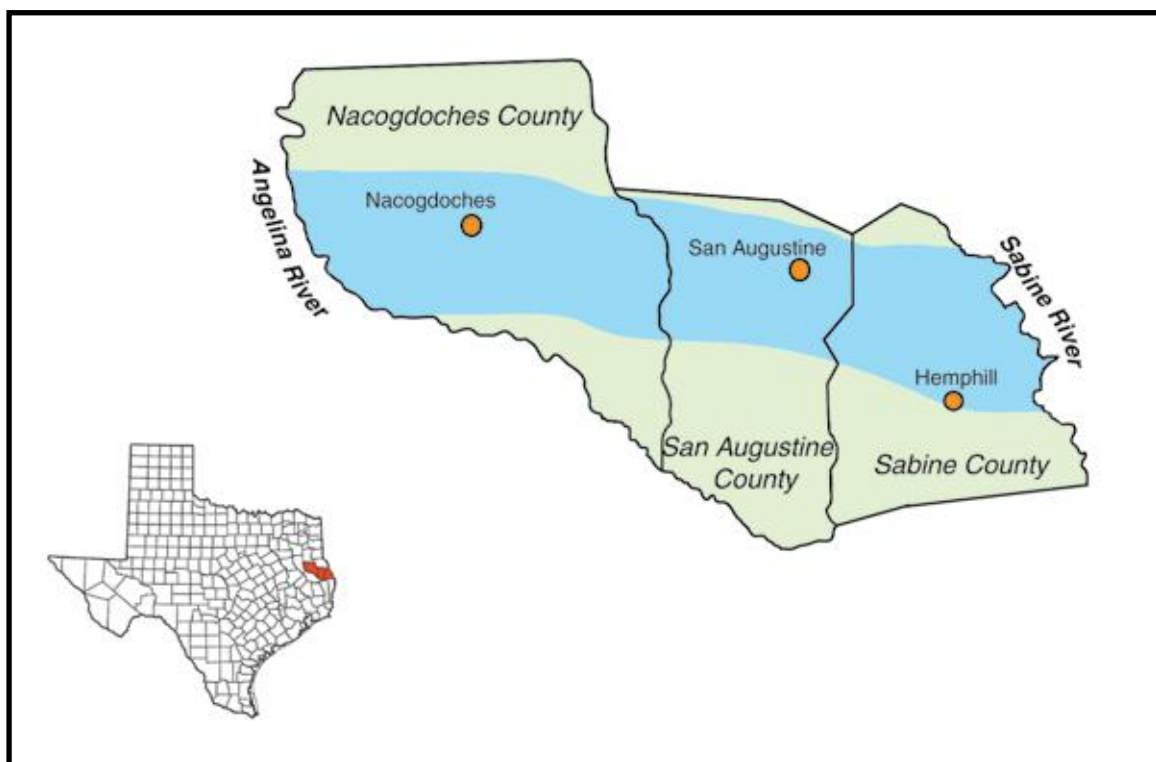


# Summary Report for *Camino Real de los Tejas* Oral History Project from the Sabine River to the Angelina River, Texas

## Phase II: Data Recovery from Elderly Informants



by

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December 31, 2010**

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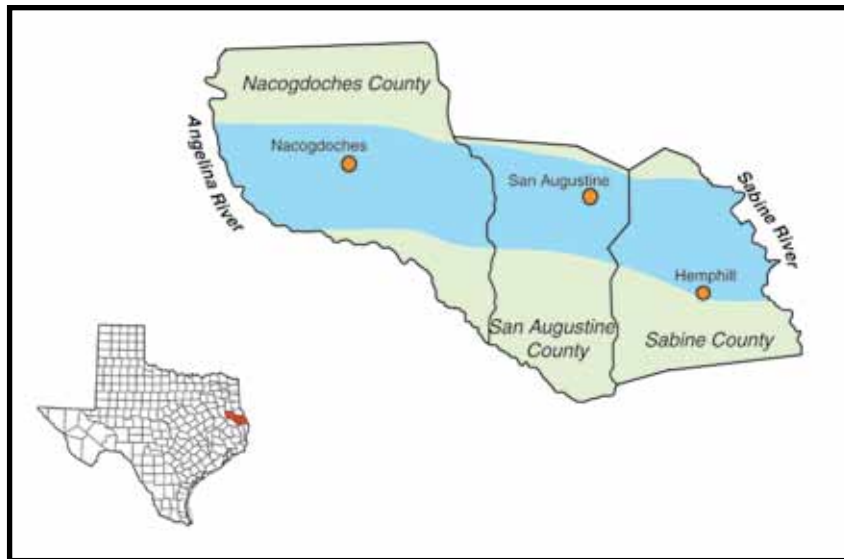
### **Project Overview**

This report summarizes the results of Phase II of the Camino Real de los Tejas Oral History Project from the Sabine River to the Angelina River. The survey area is defined by the Camino Real corridor in Sabine, San Augustine, and Nacogdoches counties (Figure 1). Phase I focused on elderly informants in mostly in Sabine and San Augustine counties, with only four from Nacogdoches county, while Phase II included five interviews from Sabine, twelve from San Augustine, and eight from Nacogdoches counties. We used the list of questions developed by Connie Hodges and George Avery for Phase I (Figure 2), and Connie again assisted in the selection of informants, she coordinated and conducted the interviews and assisted the project director with the writing of short summaries of the interviews (Appendix 1). A sample transcription of one interview is presented in Appendix 2. From December of 2009 through December 2010, 26 interviews (listed as 26-51 in Figure 3) were conducted with a total of 28 people, most aged 70 or older. One interview had to be dropped from the project (28. Winnie Greer Markle). We had received permission from Ms. Markle, but Ms. Markle's daughter objected to including the interview in our project after reading the notes from the interview. Therefore, we conducted another interview (51. Agnes Sparks) so that we would have 25 interviews for Phase II. All 26 interviews have been transcribed.

### **Discussion**

As in Phase I, the Phase II interviews have recorded a wealth of information about daily life in the area during the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s. Everyone seems to have a story of something that happened along the road. Some of the road activities including driving cattle, hauling lumber, traveling to Nacogdoches, another story about Clyde Barrow and Bonnie Parker, and recreational use of the roads.

We interviewed two descendents of the old Spanish families in Nacogdoches County. One participant, who was born in 1915 and raised in the area learned Spanish as his first language, and didn't learn English until he went to school. He and his wife did not teach Spanish to their children, although they continued to speak both Spanish and English at home—Spanish was spoken at home when the parents did not want the children to understand the conversation. Another participant, born in 1935, was not taught Spanish by his parents, although only his father spoke Spanish.



**Figure 1.** Location of study area.

### Interview Questions

1. What was it like for you growing up in this area?
2. What did your parents, grandparents do for a living?
3. What kind of local food sources did you use?
4. Did you have gardens (how large, what did you plant), or animals?
5. Tell us about home remedies that were used in your family.
6. Describe your daily life—school, chores, playtime.
7. Describe your social activities (church, ball games, etc.)
8. How long has your family owned the land?
9. Tell us about the old people and places in the area.
10. What do you remember about the old roads in the area? How did you travel? How often? How far? What was the preferred means of transportation?
11. Do you know of any stories about American Indians in the area?
12. Do you know of any stories about the Spanish in the area?
13. What can you tell us about the history of African Americans in the area?
14. Do you have any old pictures, documents, Bibles that you can show us?
15. Describe the ethnic origins on both sides of the family. Were “mixed” marriages common? Was there an effort from local state governments to force integration?
16. What language did you speak at home? Was it different than what it was spoken in the schools?
17. What was your relationship with your neighbors? With other racial groups?
18. How did you earn a living – subsistence agriculture? – did this change with time?
19. How did relations with other groups change through time? Was there an increasing dependence on each other?
20. How did you “self-identify”? Did you think of yourself as “American” or as Texans, Louisianans, Spanish, mixed breed, etc?

**Figure 2.** Interview Questions.

### **List of Interview Dates and Participants**

	<b>Date of Interview</b>	<b>Interviewee(s)</b>
26.	11-13-09	Panella Davis
27.	1-15-10	Jane Sublett
28.	1-15-10	Winnie Greer Markle
29.	1-22-10	Willie Thorpe Murray
30.	1-22-10	Lily Mae Stone
31.	1-29-10	John and Martha Butts
32.	1-29-10	Quynon Fowler
33.	2-5-10	Kay Roberts, Jr.
34.	2-5-10	Kerry King Whitton
35.	3-5-10	Howard Tindall
36.	3-5-10	Arce LeGrand
37.	3-11-10	Ronnie and Donnie Butler
38.	3-17-10	Grady Jerry Fountain
39.	3-17-10	Andrea C. Garcia
40.	3-25-10	Lavon Tindall
41.	3-25-10	Mary Fussell Nichols
42.	3-31-10	E.L. Luna
43.	6-17-10	Geraldine DuPree
44.	7-21-10	Le Juan Garrett
45.	7-28-10	Levi Evett
46.	8-4-10	Carl Shaw
47.	8-11-10	Raymond Goggan
48.	8-18-10	Felix Holmes
49.	8-18-10	Bobby Pantalion
50.	9-24-10	L.B. Simmons
51.	12-10-10	Agnes Sparks

**Figure 3.** List of interview dates and participants.

### **Discussion (cont.)**

Two participants from eastern Nacogdoches County mentioned hearing about American Indian “uprisings” in the area during the 1800s. Apparently when these uprisings would occur—the non-Indian families would leave the area until the uprisings were over, and return to a peaceful situation. A number of people also mentioned locations where Indian artifacts have been found in the past.

When asked about home remedies, there was mention of store-bought remedies such as Black Draught, Castor Oil, Turpentine, Kerosene, but there was also mention of remedies acquired from nature, such as mullein tea, pine top tea, and cow chip tea. One doctor in the area prescribed a home remedy that involved making a poultice with the interior bark of a Red Oak tree. There was also brief mention of a Hoo Doo practitioner.

One participant related the presence of a French speaking family (the Coutees) from Louisiana living in Chireno. This family may be related to the French Creole families on Cane River in Louisiana, south of Natchitoches. Another family (the Duprees) lived in the Black Ankle Community on the San Augustine/Sabine County line just a few miles north of highway 21. This family is described as coming from the Cane River in Louisiana.

The summaries in Appendix 1 were sent to the participants for their comment and revisions. The revisions are reflected in the summaries shown in Appendix 1.

This is just a brief sketch of the results of the interviews—there is a wealth of information.

### **Summary and the Future**

The goal of this project is to make connections with people, places, things, and activities that took place in the Camino Real Corridor between the Sabine and Angelina Rivers during the years 1680 and 1845. Many of the people we interviewed have family in the area before 1845, and most have had experience with activities such as raising cotton, vegetable gardens, butchering hogs, and traveling dirt roads in wagons—all of which occurred between 1680 and 1845 and continued on into the twentieth century. By recording the perspectives of our participants who experienced these activities in their life time, we get an idea of what it was like in the area between 1680 and 1845. For Phase III, we will do research to record all standing structures that were built between 1680 and 1845 in the area, along with recording the locations of churches and schools built before 1845, and cemeteries with interments prior to 1845.

### **Acknowledgements**

We gratefully acknowledge the Mission Dolores Museum and Visitor’s Center for allowing us to conduct most of our interviews there. Special thanks go to Alfred Broden, director of the Mission Dolores Museum and Visitor’s Center for helping us find people to interview, and allowing museum assistant Claudia Rentrop to help us with transcribing and typing. Claudia also helped set up numerous interviews—her efforts were essential to the success of the project and are greatly appreciated. April Davis, Administrative Assistant for the Center for Regional heritage Research was particularly helpful with payroll challenges related to SFA’s transition to a new business affairs system. SFA student worker Amanda Willey also helped with the transcriptions of the interviews and we are grateful for her contributions to the project.

**Appendix 1.**

**Summary Notes for Interviews**

**26. Panella Davis, 11-13-09**

Mr. and Mrs. Blackstock were with us at Mrs. Davis house for the interview. Life was pretty good, but we had to work for what we had. Ms. Davis will be 98 in April. Parents chopped cotton and worked hard. Canned food. Potatoes, corn, watermelon—raised all that, didn't go to the store and buy them. Used chicken manure to fertilize the garden. Better than using chemicals. Mrs. Davis didn't like meat, but others ate anything they could catch. Mrs. Davis doesn't like eating deer, goats, and all that—can't stand them. Mostly eats vegetables, but she does eat chicken. Her husband used to take an egg; put a hook in it attached to a line, and put it back under the hen to catch snakes. Went to church every Sunday. St. Luke's church—it was moved to where it is now. Mrs. Davis has been at the location of current house since 1937. One leg of her mother was cut off. Her husband died in 1982. Mrs. Davis would rather have the house instead of the trailer. Mrs. Blackstock's mother was born at Denning—Mrs. Davis remembers her and also Mrs. Blackstock's father. Mrs. Davis would take the hems out of the dresses and pressed them out. Travel was sometimes difficult—going up and down the hills—had to push the wagons up the hill. Travelled to San Augustine—about 6 miles—didn't go anywhere else. American Indians in the area—might have found arrowheads, but she didn't. Haul cotton in wagons up to the gin—called the Gin Lane—the road to the cotton gin. Mrs. Davis showed us a picture of her husband's grandfather. He used oxen to plow—oxen also pulled a wagon—plowed 72 acres. Mrs. Davis was married when the picture was taken. Never went hungry. Didn't eat sweet potatoes with butter. Self Identified as American. Doesn't remember any superstitions. Make tea out of Mullein for a cold or cough. Also make tea out of the pine needles. Put cold water on cuts—also coal oil, turpentine to stop it from bleeding. Never ate hot tamales. The old house—the one that burned—had Haints in it. They cut off Winnie's leg—they buried the leg in the cemetery across the street—St. Luke Cemetery—ants got on it and Winnie could feel the ants on her buried leg. Dug up the leg and fixed it so the ants would not eat the leg. Mentioned Hoo-Doo. The doctor took the snake out of the leg—he had a paper—that's where the snake was—it didn't really come out of her leg. Winnie is now buried near her leg. Gypsies in the area—Mrs. Davis didn't know who they were—they came through the area every so often. The Gypsies took money. There were no funeral homes at that time. If you died at home—you were put on a cooling board at the house. They would put a sheet over them—they would set up with them at night. Mrs. Davis' husband—George—his mother died in the house. There were a lot more stores in San Augustine back then than now. There was a Blackstock Store—Mrs. Davis went a lot of times to this store. Mrs. didn't go to the movies because they were at night. Rode the wagon to town, but walked most of the time. Talked about picking cotton. The cotton wouldn't sell for verymuch—5-6 bales.



## 27. Jane Sublett, 1-15-10

Mrs. Sublett grew up down the road—to the east, about 7-8 miles, just past Ford's Corner. Maiden name is Mitchell—mother was a Jones—Mitchells lived around Tebo. Mrs. Sublett was born at the Tebo place, and moved when she was 11 days old up the road a piece. Lived there until she was 11-12, and then moved to Hwy. 21 just below Ford's Corner. Bobby Harris owns it now. Married Henry Sublet and moved up the road a piece to this place. Highway 21 is where it's always been. Growing up in the area—"Poor as hell." Raised on a farm, we farmed, killed our own meat, raised our own food, came to town on Saturday, visited, went to the picture show, and went back home. Parents and grandparents farmed. Gardens weren't all that big. Planted corn and peas in the field. Smoked hogs. Killed a calf and used pressure cookers. Learned how to can meat in a 4-H club like organization. Had chickens, mules, cows, dogs, cats. Home remedies—Vicks salve and castor oil. Medicinal plants—can't remember any. Very allergic to poison ivy. Went to school, came home and played, not a lot of chores—brought in wood and drew water. Went to school at Rosevine for 9 years and then went to San Augustine and graduated. The Sublett family has been here since the Republic of Texas. Mrs. Sublet's son ((Bill) and daughter-in-law (Vonda, wife of another son) stopped by. Mrs. Sublett's mother's family came from Sabine County—kinda drifters. Sam Houston came to this house and recuperated. Mrs. Sublett's family always did have a car—Model T or something like it—so they went to town in the car. Most of the people would go to town in a wagon. Mrs. Sublett's family would buy ice in town and lick it all the way home. They didn't always have ice. Potatoes stored in the shed. Indians in the area—no Indian stories. Blacks in the area—Blacks worked for her family, lived nearby, Mrs. Sublett raised the young boy (about 9) who knew the cattle, and he lived with the neighbor that had died. He came home with Mrs. Sublett's husband and stayed. He didn't eat at the table with them, but he lived there. He was family—he passed away—he died young—around 55. Some slaves were buried in the family cemetery near the house. Mrs. Sublett has an 1855 ledger book. The book mentioned that George Crockett bought some nails. Mrs. Sublett's son, Bill, went to the national rodeo finals in 1977. Her husband also rodeoed, and another of her sons also rodeoed. Her son still raises cattle. They still own 140 acres. Mrs. Sublett had four children, three boys and one girl. Mixed marriages—not common, and still not. Only English spoken. Mrs. Sublett worked 20 years at the hospital and 20 years at Griffin Oil, and then came home. Less dependency on your neighbors over time. Self identified as Texan. There was a Black man in San Augustine who would sell tamales and Mrs. Sublett ate some of his tamales. Mrs. Sublett's husband, Henry, is buried in the cemetery. Asked that he be buried facing the house—which is facing west—Henry wasn't a morning person anyway—so Henry was buried facing the house. Mrs. Sublett brought Henry home when he died—he was born and raised here. Another daughter-in-law knows about superstitions. The guitar in the house strummed by itself. A ghost has been seen in the house, but not by Mrs. Sublett or Bill.

28. Winnie Greer Markle, 1-15-10

[Daughter objected to including the interview in the project]

## 29. Willie Thorpe Murray, 1-22-10

Mrs. Murray's great great grandparents came here in 1848 and they bought 1,000 acres of land—Washington G. Atkinson (came from Georgia, originally from Ireland)—from the Almaladeros Creek to the Polysot Creek—paid \$1,200. Five generations of family buried in the family cemetery. Went to school in Chireno, and grew up on the farm here. Mother sent us to San Marcos Baptist Academy for one year—tried to make ladies out of us. Had one sister—was ill and died 50 some years ago. Mother's side—Sanders—raised in the Denning community. Daddy was a farmer for all of his life. In the 1950s, agriculture went down—cotton allotment was sold to West Texas and the old fields were turned into pasture and cattle ranching became predominant here. Up until that time, tenant farmers were prevalent. Government programs—cattle bought by government and killed. In the 1960s broiler houses came in. Wonderful growing up here—didn't know we were poor. Mrs. Murray was 16 years old before she knew that you used money for anything but paying property taxes and a federal land note. Raised everything we ate. Horses to ride, worked in the fields, all children had chores. Was 6 years old—talked about buying more land, but needed the help of the whole family. Mrs. Murray plowed a whole field of corn with a mule when she was 8 years old. Baled hay. Had to cut wood for the winter. Mule—the larger ones were from Missouri, and the smaller ones were called Mexican mules—Daddy got Mrs. Murray one of those. The mule had four white feet—unusual. Had to put a muzzle on the mule to keep it from eating the corn. This field was about 25 acres. At age 13-14 Mrs. Murray had a big watermelon patch (3-4 acres). A lot of kids were getting jobs in town, and Daddy said we only have one car and you can't take it to town, but you can plant a watermelon patch if you want to make a little money. Charleston Grays—weighed about 80 pounds. Sutton saw mill in Chireno—this road was a dirt road. Daddy made Mrs. Murray a slide, like a box with little runners underneath and she would take her mule and pull that box with watermelons to Sutton's Mill and sell those watermelons for 50 cents each. A black man lived on the corner—Mr. Henderson—if she had any watermelons left she would sell one to him for a quarter, so she wouldn't have to take it home—her first spending money. Plowing watermelons was a trick. Married in 1952. Sammy Sanders—grandfather—logging. Dickey Davis—logging—could work a horse to death. He went to work for a dollar a day at the mill. Mother always had a big garden. Planted gladiolas by the fence so the fence would support the flowers. Had a peach orchard and a bunch of pear trees. Wild plums—made jelly. Pickled peaches, pear preserves. Pickled, canned, or cooked anything. Hickory nuts also. Black walnut trees.

Mrs. Murray lived 1.5 miles south of Chireno, but the electric line ended about a mile up the road. During the war years they got the line extended, so they didn't get electricity until 1946. Washed clothes in a wash pot. House built 75 years ago. Metoyers raised a family nearby, in an open buggy—got to the Polysot Creek in the spring time and it was overflowed, and the water was over the bottom of the buggy, but Mrs. Metoyer wouldn't raise her dress to keep it from getting wet because he would see her ankles. Garden—probably about ½ acre. Has a big long row of popcorn every year. Canned vegetables all through the winter. Turnip and mustard greens. Mixture of peas and beans—favorite. Didn't waste anything—fed byproducts from vegetables to livestock, also make bedding for livestock—used everything from a pig except the squeal. Use the pig bladder for a balloon. Made hogshead cheese. Described hog killing—might be 10-20 hogs killed in one day. 20 lb. hams cured the best. Sold a lot of pigs to other people. Mother sold butter, cream, and buttermilk. Peddlers came through—one had a van with two big doors that opened at the back—

had baking powder, soda, needles and thread, material, things a housewife out in the country wouldn't have, and mother would trade him fresh eggs and butter, and he would take them back to town. Sister and I collected eggs. Chicken snake—put a glass egg in the nest so the snake would swallow it and die. Porcelain door knobs—always need to leave an egg in the nest so the chickens will keep laying. Would leave a white porcelain door knob in the nest, and the chickens would come back and lay eggs. Had Guineas. Wild hogs are eating snakes—ecosystem will be out of balance. School—in Chireno, built in 1929—brick. Hot lunch program in the 1940s. Black Jack School—consolidated with Chireno. Fund raisers—box suppers. Softball games. Very little basketball. Volleyball team—Mrs. Murray played on this team. Family has owned the land since 1848. Talked about grandparents. Roads in the area—would get stuck in the mud driving back from town—walked home, and next day Daddy would take the mule and pull the car out. Boards across the creek—were not allowed to cross if the water was over the boards. At times, the water would rise after they crossed the creek, so on the way back, had to leave the car there and stay at a friend's house. Roads were really bad. Paved this road (Farm to Market Road 95) in the late 1950s. Hard to get anti-freeze during the war years. Mrs. Murray's job in the winter was to drain the water from the radiator at night so it wouldn't freeze, and fill it up the next day. Always had a car. 1934—Parents got married. Mother didn't know how to drive, and Daddy said he didn't have time to teach her so one day she needed something from town and got into the car and started driving—tore off both fenders on the car driving it out from the carport, but did get the car out. Daddy then taught her to drive. Pendleton Ferry—had to pull yourself across with a rope. Late 1930s put in a bridge. 1934, a politician giving a campaign speech in Chireno promised that Highway 21 was going to be paved, and it was paved in either late 1935 or 1936. Daddy's father died when he was 8—talked about going to Nacogdoches. Got up before daylight, hitched up the wagon—took all day to go to Nacogdoches. Tended to their business in town and then camped at Egnog Branch, with a lot of other people. Then took all day back to Chireno and maybe they unloaded all their stuff before losing daylight. Gillette Tilford, a lumberman who lived in Nacogdoches, several he and Mrs. Murray's father were on federal jury duty in Tyler—would take 8 days to get to Houston in a car—would go so far and have a flat, have to fix the flat—the roads were practically nonexistent. Now it's twenty minutes from Chireno to Nacogdoches. The hills were just terrible. Horton Hill was bad. Sand Hill was a long hill. Sugar sand was so deep in the summer that wagon wheels would bog down in it in the summer just like they would bog down in mud in the winter. Alma Lake moved to Chireno from Martinsville, and coming from Martinsville in wagons they had to double team the wagons to get them up the hill, and while they were waiting to get the wagons up the hill a lady who lived nearby gave them cookies to eat while they were waiting. Her family lived in the country and she boarded in Chireno in the winter time to go to school because the roads were so bad. Indians in the area—Mr. Randolph Fall, first store in Chireno, his son was the first white child born in Chireno and the Indians came by because they wanted to rock his cradle—this is oral history that was passed down. No stories of hostilities related to Indians in the area. Lot of arrowheads found around here, but it's getting rarer and rarer to find them. Ricky Holloway had quite a collection of arrowheads that he picked up over a 20 year period. Spanish—no stories of Spanish. Lots of Black people lived here, worked in the cotton fields. When Mrs. Murray was young, you were not allowed to call older people by their first names—had to be Aunt so and so, Uncle etc., was taught to be respectful to Black people. In Chireno nearly all of the Black people owned property. Mrs. Murray has attended the Black church. Two cotton gins in Chireno—the Mauss and the Buckner Gin—Mrs. Murray and Captain (a Black man) were going to the gin and had money to eat at the café. Captain had to eat at the

back. In the 1950s, a doctor had a segregated waiting room. Two different drinking fountains—colored and white. Same at train depot. Has grandmother’s old family bible—has tin type pictures, but no names on them. History of Chireno—the red book. English was the only language spoken. Spanish speaking families who were into the area would not allow their children to speak Spanish. A Family from Louisiana spoke fluent French (they were French Canadian) when they came to Chireno—they weren’t allowed to go to the white school because they were colored—they were an olive color, so they went to black schools and intermarried with the black families in the area. They ran a little store on the road. Mrs. Murray would ride her horse to town and stop by the store and talk to Dennis and Victorine and she liked them to talk French. There was one family of Y’Barbos and the father spoke fluent Spanish, but he wouldn’t let his children speak Spanish. When they hired out to pick cotton they wanted them to work in a different field. “Language barrier” between Mr. and Mrs. Murray (he was from Oklahoma)—she would put the car in the car house, and he would put the car in the garage. He would ask for a gunny sack and she called it a tow sack. She had red bugs and he called them chiggers. She called them grass spurs and he called them sand spurs. Really good relationships with neighbors. Mrs. Murray’s mother worked very hard—would make quilts for people, would give canned foods to people, and would stay with people who were sick. Folk medicine—coal oil. Poison ivy common—fever weed—boil it in water and rub it on poison ivy. Quinine—fill up the empty capsules—took capsules. Paragard—for pain. Dr. Taylor made house calls. A colored lady used a big fuzzy leaf plant—mullein. Also Vicks Salve. Castor oil. Three sss. Black Draft. Empincaygo (sp?). More dependency on neighbors back then. Tenant farmers—talked about work in the evening. Coon hunting. Fishing—perch and catfish. Always had fried chicken on Sunday. Went to Bland Lake Sunday afternoon and have a picnic lunch. Traded homemade biscuit and ham sandwich for light bread at school. On rare occasions, box of crackers, bananas (a stalk). After the bananas were all eaten, Mrs. Murray’s father would hang the stalk in the chicken house and the stalk would somehow take care of chicken mites. China Berry gun. Tom Blount—raised around Denning, daddy was a doctor. Ribbon cane syrup. Brick “play house.” Raised peanuts—government regulated the production of peanuts. Two of Mrs. Murray’s uncles went to the CCC camps. Paid \$35 a month, \$30 of which was sent back to your family—you kept \$5. You were furnished with a place to eat, food, and schooling. Most of the national forests were planted by CCC. Mrs. Murray’s two uncles worked at Milam Lake (Red Hill Lake). Many years later her mother learned to swim there. Had picnics over there at Milam Lake. Self Identify—American first, Texan—Native Texan. Member of the Daughters of the Republic of Texas. Mom never made tamales. The Moral Catholic Church made tamales—and still do, once a year as a fund raiser. A Mexican worker made tamales out of cow heads—baked in the ground. Lye soap, cracklings, crackling corn bread. Early 1940s—hobos on the road, fed outside, not inside. Built a brick house after the wood house was blown away by a tornado—also built a basement in the brick house. Ghost stories—weenie roasts—ghost stories very scary. Metoyer family had a headless stuffed guy—would pull it up and down at the creek to scare people. Lot of ghost stories. Superstitions—black cat crossed the road—drive clear around to avoid the cat. Irish ancestry, lots of superstition. Coutee—family from Louisiana. POW camp—about 300 incarcerated. Used in the log woods, in 1943 bad freeze, used POWs to salvage wood. Granddaddy supervised a crew. The POWs would whittle little wooden toys for the kids. 15 years ago a POW came back to Chireno. People were so nice here. Dances were out there—they got sugar and chocolate, which was hard to get. Mrs. Waters owned the land where the site was. The McKinney owns the property now—didn’t want the marker on the property. Part of a cement bunker is still there, but nothing else. Barbed wire fence back then. The Stricklands lived

near the camp, and one of the POWs gave a uniform to the Stricklands—the uniform is at the Half Way House. Also gave him a pair of boots—Mr. Strickland went barefoot. Family buried in the lower cemetery, Chireno. The cemetery is like a storybook—Mrs. Murray’s mother would tell her about the people in the cemetery.

### 30. Lily Mae Stone, 1-22-10

Mrs. Stone's mother died at 22 years old right after Mrs. Stone was born. Father was an Atkinson—Fred. Grandmother was a Garret. Settled between San Augustine and Chireno, in the little chapel area. Grandfather Garret went back to Virginia, fought and died in the Civil War, is buried in Arlington Cemetery. Member of the DRT. Father had bought a house in Chireno—Mrs. Stone still owns the house, has been in the family for 99 years. Electricity came to Chireno in 1936, but only in the village. Had three fireplaces that burned continually. Mrs. Stone lived with her grandmother, who was insistent on good grammar and manners, but at times Mrs. Stone boarded with a distant relative who ran a hotel. She went to San Marcos school to learn how to be a lady when she was 10 or 11. Came back, married very young—married for 61 years. Harold Keith Stone husband (died 8 years ago), involved in the Normandy invasion. There was a wood stove in the kitchen—grandmother was ill quite a bit. Mrs. Stone retired from insurance company in Nacogdoches—worked for 31 years. Mrs. Stone is a dancing Methodist—learned the hula while living in Hawaii. No sisters or brothers—people very welcoming in Chireno when growing up. Cotton was important before WWII, but afterwards not. Grandmother always had a cow. Mrs. Stone went to get eggs—she was small and reached up and touched a snake—scared her. Grandmother tried to teach Mrs. Stone to milk, but she just couldn't learn, so they took the cow away. Mrs. Murray's father was Mrs. Stone's uncle. Grandmother died at 81—only an occasional gray hair—Mrs. Stone kept her hair for a while. Mrs. Stone's grandmother came in a wagon from Shelbyville—she had some connections there. The Garret House had a cemetery. Many of the old houses had a kitchen that was separate from the main house. Aunt Minny Matts, a black lady who did laundry for people. Had a basket of laundry balanced on her head—delivering the laundry. Mrs. Stone's father taught school (in San Augustine?) and bought and sold cotton seed. Mrs. Stone has a certificate for her father—when he went to school. Home remedies—running from the castor oil! Uncle had a big two story house in Chireno (burned up) moved from Louisiana. Chireno didn't have a fire truck at the time. Leo Bishop came from San Augustine and straightened everyone out (Mrs. Stone was about 10). He also cleaned up San Augustine. Mrs. Stone played basketball in San Marcos Baptist Academy. Two cotton gins—Mauss and Buckner. Doesn't remember anything about the POW camp. Roads—father had a model A or T, granny kept it in the barn. Uncle had a used car lot—Mrs. Stone wanted to learn how to drive and Uncle said go ahead—she drove on a sand road, deep sand, burned the motor out. Her uncle just laughed. Very little blacktop roads in the area. People would find arrow heads in the area. Spanish—Carl Y'Barbo. Self Identify—Texan. Tamales—Mexican lady brings chicken tamales to Methodist church, but no memories of tamales growing up. Superstitions or ghost stories—no. No haunted buildings in Chireno. We scanned the certificate.

### 31. John and Martha Butts, 1-29-10

Martha—parents Woodrow and Iris Mathews, and they had a store in downtown San Augustine, father's parents had the store before him. Father had to drop out of school at 16 to work at the store during the 1930s. Thomas cemetery is Martha's family cemetery—working on getting a historical marker. John—parents were B.G. and Minnie T. Butts, his father was Harvey J. Butts, mother Ethel. Father came from Gregg County in the late 1920s to work in the Coca-Cola bottling co. when it was moved from Plano to Center, he was a Coca-Cola salesman. Was delivering Coca-Cola to a rural store, and he got stuck. He went up to a colored people's house and they had a team of mules and he asked them to pull him out of the mud hole, and they hooked the team of mules to the front of the truck, and when they pulled they pulled the axle out from under the truck, so he was in worse shape than when he started. Mother was a Thomson—her parents were John and Minnie Thomson. His father came from Scotland and moved over here in the 1860s-70s. He was born in Ohio. He was a road contractor—was mayor of San Augustine at one time, and then lost it all in the Depression. His wife—came from Tennessee—settled in Long Street, Louisiana. Their respective families were on either side of a dirt road, and that's how they became acquainted. Some of the old bridges that John's grandfather built are still around. Some were on Hwy 21, most were south on Hwy 96. John—wonderful memories growing up. They say if you get the red dirt of San Augustine between your toes, you'll never get it out—and that's probably true. Martha—as perfect a childhood as possible—the community did raise the children. John—used to be a ferry at Pendleton Bridge, remembers going to the dedication of the bridge. He remembers going across the river on the ferry just to say that they had done it. Had a team of mules on either side of the river, not motorized. Held 2-3 cars, had 2-3 people on either side. Martha—no gardens. In the 1940s-50s, the store stayed open as long as there were customers in the store. Martha—had a farm on 1277 where grandfather lived—there was a red hill, and when it rained a lot, could not drive it. John remembers when the roads in town were not paved, Martha doesn't. On Saturday afternoon you could hardly walk in San Augustine there were so many people—buggies and wagons. People would sell vegetables out of their wagons. Maneuvers Reds and Blues. The Blue Army came through town, gave people hard tack, piece of candy, coffee and biscuits. John's father worked for Butt's Chevrolet, owned by John's uncle—where Bogard's is now. Dwight David Eisenhower (head of the Blue Army) had his picture taken with John's dad and uncle in front of the dealership. Had WWI tanks, most were cavalry, and had a few trucks. Ford's Corner—a dirt road—really sandy, dusty, when the tanks came by you couldn't see. 6 Mile Hill—south of Hemphill—lots of battles down there. There were thousands—they would camp at parks, along the highways. Camped at a park east of town that's not there anymore—by Mr. Smiths—they had tents. CCC Camp on Hwy 21 just east of Milam on the right—DeWitt Thomson was there. They built several schools, Red Hill Lake. John had a great Uncle there. The army bought local produce. John's first memory of a car—he was standing up in the back seat, turned the corner at the First Baptist Church, looking for a little dog. John lived in the city—always remembers having a vehicle. Everyone had a Victory Garden—grow stuff that had to go overseas. Home remedies—castor oil, Rose (Grove's?) Chill Tonic, Sassafras Tea—believed to be a cure-all. Epsom Salts. Medicinal plant—make a poultice—grind up the leaves—long leave plant—mullein. Kerosene—coal oil. Black draught. Martha—doesn't remember any home remedies—went to the drugstore, Casey Jones was the local pharmacist. John—at recess at school could get three pieces of candy for a nickel—Bit-O-Honey, Mars Bar, Three Musketeers. Played with tops, went swimming, smoked grape vine. Everyone had a bicycle. Leo Bishop—a Texas Ranger. Doodlebug—the one way to



get to town if you didn't have some sort of transportation—railroad—had an engine, mail car, and caboose. Came from the south (Beaumont) in the morning and from the north in the afternoon. Leo Bishop got off the Doodlebug—one ranger, one town. John remembers sitting at the City Café with his father and Leo Bishop was there—he had two guns—pearl handled. John was going to have his tonsils taken out, and Bishop promised in the café to send John some ice cream, and he did. Dr. Morris—big black hat. Mr. Lee Whitton with a long white beard—some kid told him once he thought he was Santa Claus. John's grandfather's father had a wagon and they were going to Nacogdoches—it was 35 miles. Tied an ox to the back of the wagon and the tale was that it was 35 miles to Nacogdoches and the oxen walked 165 miles. 147 used to be 96, then they built 96. Remembers Model A and T. Mr. Budd lived four miles from town and he used to walk to town to get his groceries. There was a funeral in town, Mr. Budd was 98 and walking home and John offered Mr. Budd a ride home, and Mr. Budd said no, I need the exercise. American Indians in the area—John says this is hearsay, has heard about Indian mounds, the only specific mention of an Indian mound is out north of town and east of Liberty Hill. Across from the Methodist Church—they exhumed the body of a Methodist missionary. Shooting at Clark and Downs, seems like there was an Indian man involved. When John was growing up there was only one Spanish family in the area named Procella. Black and White people in the area—“there was respect, with a wall.” But now it seems that we've built another wall. No mixed marriages. Everybody knew everybody—everybody kept an eye on strangers, not suspicious but protective. Originally the reason they sat up with the deceased was to keep animals out of the casket. The funeral homes stopped the “sitting up.” Self identify—Martha—American, John—American. VE day, John was in high school. Vessie selling tamales. Had a big round container—a nickel a piece. “Hot tamales and that ain't all.” Bootlegger. “Hot tamales and that's all.” There were people in the area that made tamales. Ghost stories—Episcopal Church was dilapidated. Story about getting pigeons. Crockett house was said to be haunted. POW camp—that was evidence that there really was a war going on. Not escapes but leftees—prisoners who got left out in the woods. To begin with, they thought it was going to be a horrible thing. Archie Blue ran a cotton compress, had a club foot, was a member of the KKK, during a KKK parade in San Augustine—was noticeable because of his limp. Two kids got killed riding their bicycle—colored man hit them with a pulp wood truck. It was this kids fault, but there was quite a fury that started—prejudice. Mothers grandmother Rosins, came from Louisiana, were going to San Angelo, and had an ox cart and a covered wagon. Had stopped at the Attoyac, there was a “for rent” sign there—and the kids said, “Let's stop here, we're tired and we don't want to go on to San Angelo.” So the father said, okay—we'll stay here until spring. But they stayed the rest of their lives. Martha was a little girl (8 years old), they would visit Wooden—the Rabbit bus line—was a station wagon—remembered around Zavala there was a bridge, and they would have to stop and get off the station wagon and walk across the bridge. John—the church influence was strong—everyone here was associated with the church—didn't have a television. Social life was church life. Church influence was more profound back then. Travel—you went to Nacogdoches. Austin was like a foreign country.

### 32. Quynon Fowler, 1-29-10

Mr. Fowler lived near Chireno. Wasn't many cars—horse and buggy days. All the land was cleared—you could see for miles—the only trees you would see would be on the creeks—the rest of the land was in cultivation. Cotton was the money crop. Southland Paper came in and switched to timber. Mr. Fowler remembers Hwy 21 before it was paved. Most people were friendly and good natured—friendlier then than they are now. Dr. Taylor made house calls, most of the kids were born at home. Mr. Fowler's father worked for the WPA. He cleared stumps along the road by hand—with a pick and shovel. Brought convicts from Huntsville to work on Hwy 21—they'd have a ball and chain, 25 feet long, worked on the roads. Sometime they had farmers out there—they used mules and a slip to scoop up the dirt and pile it up. The mules pulled the slip. Mules pulled the graders. Two or three men loading and unloading gravel on a wagon with a shovel. Most of it was mules and hand labor working on the roads. Mr. Fowler worked all day chopping cotton for one dollar. A dollar a day and a dinner. Mr. Fowler grew up on a farm. Always had a garden. Most everyone had pigs, chickens, and some cattle. Hunting was much more popular back then. No electricity—you didn't wait until night to do reading. Most gardens were an acre. Would plant a row of peas in the corn field to feed stock. About all farmers had to buy was soda, flour and black pepper—they raised everything else. School would start around September—might start a little late because most of the students were working gathering the crop. And would let kids out of school earlier. April—cotton chopping time. Big families back then—both black and white. 6 in a family was a small family. 10-11 kids average, 15-20 kids was not unusual. Mr. Fowler's father started out sharecropping, working on halves. Later in life, it was third and fourths—at that time about all you got was what you ate and wore. Does not remember a crossing on Attoyac River other than the bridge. Went to Chireno elementary. The Black school was just down the hill from the White school. The building is gone. It was right at the Bethlehem Church—the church and the school had the same well. The well was between the school and the church. The school was a wood building. The White school was wood also. Mr. Fowler's family went to Chireno on Saturday—you could see everybody. The school was 6 miles and Mr. Fowler walked there every day. Before integration the White kids got a school bus, but Mr. Fowler still walked. Now, the Black school did get a bus before integration, but it was after Mr. Fowler finished school, so it didn't help him any. He walked with ten other kids—or at least 3-4. There were 11 kids in his family. Mr. Fowler remembers the older people, White and Black, talking about traveling between Chireno and San Augustine and passing Indians. After the Indian uprising, they lived way out with their own traditions. They didn't want anyone bothering them—but that was back in Mr. Fowler's mother and father's time. Spanish in the area—Chireno has a Spanish name—the Y'Barbo family—live in Blackjack. The Black cemetery and White cemetery are joined now in Chireno. One time they sent the Spanish people back to Mexico—this was early in Mr. Fowler's life. Self identifies as American. American Black and White have paid the price for this country. Mr. Fowler has known about tamales all his life. About ghosts, "I can say this—no one has caught one." Mom's dad came to New Orleans on a slave ship and walked to San Augustine. A few blacks around here got 40 acres and a mule. But they couldn't hold it because they couldn't afford it. Home remedies—used pine top tea, mullein tea for whooping cough. Take the hog fizzle—render the grease and put on the chest. Cow chip tea. Hog hoof tea for whooping cough and a bad cold. Have pine top tea year round. Seven year itch—go in the woods and dig up bull nettles and boil them and bathe in the water.

**33. Kay Roberts, Jr., 2-5-10**

Has a brother who lives in Lufkin. Mr. Roberts is 78 years. Used to live in Sabine County. Farmed about 10 years. Also worked for the REA for 17 years. Farmed with a mule. Played bingo, dominos, and marbles. Hunted deer and squirrel. Garden was about one half acre. Raised cotton and corn and peas. He had 6 acres. Had pigs, chickens, and cows—milked every morning. Went to school at Geneva—forgot where the school was. Went to church, had ball games. Went to Mount Zion Church. Lived about 6 miles away from Hwy 21. Sid Dennis Road—an old road. Had a big pond back of the house and fished there. First had a wagon with two mules, later on bought a pick-up and then a car. Remembers going to church in a wagon. Indians in the area—no. There were Spanish in the area—forgot their names—they lived on the right. Sometimes got stuck in the wagon—it was bad back in there. Ate tamales and made tamales growing up. Has been in Colonial Pines 12 years. Parents are buried at Mount Zion. Mr. Roberts would rather pick peas than pick cotton. Mr. Roberts' mother made soap—boiled it in a pot, took about 2-3 hours. Poured it into jars, and then washed your hands with it—take a bath with it. Went to school in a wagon, took about 2 hours, and usually went with someone who could help you. Mentioned a bunch of stores in San Augustine. Had a brother and two sisters. Went to school through the ninth grade—went to school two days a week and farmed three days a week. Had four rooms in the school—called Sunset—it's still there. Teachers—Miss Lewis, named several others—5-6 teachers. No medicine—used pine straw. Dr. Haley, Dr. Bennet—walked to see Dr. Haley—walked two miles.

### 34. Kerry King Whitton, 2-5-10

Father was Robert Benjamin Whitton, born 1894 in San Augustine, mother Nevil King born in Upshur County, her mother also, grandparents born in Alabama, married in Los Angeles County, Long Beach, in 1930. Whitton grandfather was in the E Banks Company, headquartered in Nacogdoches. He was 16 when got into the home guard. Became a surveyor in 1869, in 1902, moved to Shelby County, Timpson. Grandfather was an avid gardener. Father's family came from Georgia—had fig trees grown from cuttings that were brought to Texas from Georgia in the 1840s. A few years ago there was a real hard freeze, 1983, and it got the fig trees. Granddaddy lived to be within four months of 103—was in good health until the last year. Their first car—stayed active surveying until 1932. Would come to San Augustine on a horse, and in the 1920s he got a racing sulky. In the late 1920s, they bought him a car, were afraid he might get hurt. Santa Fe railroad to Bland Lake. In 1943 when mother's brother went to work in the shipyards in Orange, Mr. Whitton's maternal grandmother rode all the way from Longview to Beaumont on that little train to see his uncle at Orange. It took all day—they would stop when someone would come out of the woods and let them on the train. Sometimes Mr. Whitton would hitchhike from A&M to Nacogdoches. Cost 45-55 cents to ride the bus to Ratcliff at the Attoyac River. His father grew plum and pecan trees. Mother's daddy had pecans planted there, some are still alive—he died in 1926. Went to school 7 years to Pine Tree School in Gregg County. 4 years in Longview—graduated in San Augustine. Went to A&M, graduated in 1956, daddy had graduated there in 1917. Went into the army, 2 years active duty, 7.5 total active and reserve duty. Most of active duty at Fort Polk. Tried to grow apples, but it's not cold enough here. Granddaddy was the surveyor. Gasoline was being rationed, hard to come by, Mr. Whitton got some infected tick and red bug bites in 1943 while following property lines with his father in San Augustine County. Father worked in the gas fields after he got out of the navy in WWI. Spent senior of high school in San Augustine. Took typing and shorthand in high school, no math courses taught that he hadn't already had. Mr. Whitton taught math in Port Arthur, elementary and 7-8<sup>th</sup> grade. Worked one year teaching at San Augustine. After that, mostly tree farming. Licensed lawyer in 1969, practiced mainly for himself and some family. So all the years spent in the woods with his daddy in San Augustine, Nacogdoches, and Shelby County served him well. Until 1957-8, there was a steel truss bridge until they built the present bridge. Water was high while they were working on the new bridge—water was over it, had to go all back to Center, down highway 7 to 21 and then back to Chireno. His daddy got washed off the bridge one time. This was Almaderos Creek. The way they have it now is Amaladeros. Creek. Atososo—people call it “Tusko” Creek, means boggy creek (according to the Texas Almanac). Ironosa—Arenosa—means sandy creek. Doctor came by. Mr. Whitton has met Bobby Johnson in 1971, through Jim McReynolds. Bobby grew up around New London. Mr. Whitton remembers driving by the New London school explosion when he was three years old, seeing the great big pile of debris in 1937. Went to school at SFA in 1953 between freshman and sophomore years at A&M. Took zoology, second part of American History from Dr. Maxwell. Spanish contingent near the Attoyac—not many of them still speak it. Y'Barbo—calls it “Why Barbo” now. On the Catholic Church road—a bunch of people there with Spanish ancestry. No one in the area who makes hot tamales that he knows of. Never traveled in a wagon except as a lark. Mother's first cousin had a grocery store in Big Sandy (Upshur County) and until 1949 or 1950 they delivered groceries in a wagon, so Mr. Whitton would get a wagon ride. That was a big treat to ride in that wagon. In the 1950s they got a pick-up truck. 37-39, lived in Louisiana, Mr. Whitton would go out to the farm, come back riding back on

the cotton wagon—was fascinated by the gin. When Mr. Whitton was about three years old, he got to playing “filling station” and he filled his folks’ car up with water. In Louisiana, Raspberry was the family name, they had a milk cow in the pasture, and they were going to de-horn the milk cow. They were trying to hold the cow with just ropes—had difficulties. Cut the horn close to the head—blood shot up—thought she was going to die, but she didn’t.

### 35. Howard Tindall, 3-5-10

Mr. Tindall was born in the Alazan Community, moved to San Augustine County in 1937, near the Attoyac, New Hope Community. Daddy's side—Jim Tindall, mother from Alazan Community. Has one brother, Nathan L. Tindall, born in Alazan also, sheriff of San Augustine. Great grandfather, died in 1997, served in WWI, had all of his grand kids wear white to his funeral. Same location for bridge over the Attoyac—new bridge located right where the old bridge was. Farmed 50 acres of watermelons one year. Mr. Tindall hauled watermelons to Beaumont. Also farmed cotton and corn—plowed with horses, and then got a tractor after WWII, then went into the dairy business. Always had plenty to eat. But with farming, one year ahead, one year go in the hole. Mr. Tindall chopped cotton 50 cents a day—he was 18-19 years old when they bought a tractor, worked it 20 years. Whole family picked cotton—father and older brother could pick 300, Mr. Tindall and his mother could pick 290. Sugar cured ham, kept in a box with sugar, and then smoked it. Used hickory wood to smoke. No knowledge of crossings over the Attoyac other than the bridge. Grew tomatoes for the market. Home remedies—quinine used by his father. Quit school. Dances every Saturday night. They always leased the land. Hauled logs, in the wrecking business when moved to town. Went to work at a car dealership. Went in the sawmill business. Mr. Calico had a store. Had a wagon first, got a car in about 1936, father had a Model T. First pick-up bought in 1938, bought a brand new pick-up—1939—for \$300 dollars. American Indians—found some artifacts in the area. Spanish in the area—had a lot of Spanish people lived there. They worked on shares, like Mr. Tindall did. There were about 30 rent houses there. Blacks in the area—lots in Camp Worth—had a school to 12<sup>th</sup> grade—a sawmill town. Cleared 4-5 acres every year, to get some “fresh” dirt—when they grew cotton and corn. No photos. Father retired at E.L. Bruce, Center, and plywood mill. Mother was operated on for appendicitis in Nacogdoches, \$250, paid part in meat. Mixed marriages none when growing up. Self Identify—American. No ghost stories—had to work all the time, didn't have time for ghost stories. Tamales—didn't know about anyone who made them in Alazan, in San Augustine, mentioned “Hot Tamales, and that ain't all,” man who sold tamales in San Augustine and also sold bootleg whiskey. But after spending time in jail, it was “Hot tamales, and that's all.” Mr. Tindall remembered that his grandma made tamales, once a year, needed a hog head. Everybody made moonshine—in Alazan. Mr. Tindall's father also made it. They used to turn one another in—had an uncle who went to the pen. His father made it when they were little. People made it around the town of San Augustine.

### 36. Arce LeGrand, 3-5-10

Benny and Leona Fitzgerald. Grandparent, Wyatt and Ella Fitzgerald. Ben and \_\_\_ Sanders. First memories are of the store where Hwy 7 and 21 meet, owned by her grandfather. Lives in Norwood community now. Born in San Augustine county, but when she was 6, mother and dad moved to Nacogdoches County, Shady Grove community, lived there until was in the 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup> grade, and then moved to Chireno, and lived there until was in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade, when we moved back home. In the 1920s and 1930s it was rough. Father was a farmer at first, then retired from DOW chemical. Grandfather was blind. Mrs. LeGrand wrote a history on her father and grandfather for her son and other family members. Had gardens, raised their own meat—hogs. Killed hog in the fall. Mostly dried the peas. Canned tomatoes, peaches, corn. Number 3 metal can for meat. Battered the steak and then put it in the can. About 20 cans in the pressure cooker—a big pressure cooker. Had a sealer to seal the cans. You could re-use the can. You could only use the can twice because it would get too short. Growing things almost year round—you plant potatoes the 14<sup>th</sup> of February. Home remedies—rarely went to the doctor—castor oil, quinine. Dr. Taylor Mast was a wonderful country doctor in Chireno. He charged very little. He came to see Mrs. LeGrand when she had an abscess on her lung—came to see her 12 times and charged her daddy 13 dollars. He had a car and an old dog that went with him, but he never drove so fast that the dog could keep up with him running along with him. Mother got a splinter in her foot—doctor said he could cut it out, but that would require stitches, so he told her to go home and get some soft bark from a red oak tree and boil it until it was tender and put it on the foot—she did and that drew the splinter out. So Dr. Mast used home remedies too. His house is still there in Chireno—third house on the right on 95. Everybody had something to do—brother had to get the fire wood and Mrs. LeGrand had to get the stove wood. Nobody had electricity. She loved school. Norwood. Walked a mile to school each way. She lived on Hwy. 21 toward Nacogdoches near the creek—had to walk up the big hill. Always had her brother with her and other kids. Ball games were not that important—went to church. Didn't have lights, so couldn't play ball at night. Her family rented the land, and later bought land in San Augustine County. She lived on Hwy 21 when they paved it. The house got dusty—had to keep the windows closed. Sometime in 1933-36 or later, Highway 21 was paved. The roads in this county were terrible. The road is exactly in the place it was where they paved it where she lived. Dad had a car. If it was raining, he would drive them to school. Dad always had some money. The first cars didn't have side windows. Most people had wagons. Nobody drove but her father—she learned how to drive when she got married. Her dad had a team of horses and a wagon. Husband worked in the shipyard at Orange when WWII started. Came back in 1945, built a house and put in electricity. American Indians—found a few arrowheads, at Norwood. Found a round rock—grinding stone. Spanish in the area—went to school in Chireno with some Spanish people, she did better than one of the Spanish family boys in Spanish class. African Americans—had friends, but didn't mix. Has family photographs. She painted a picture of the home where her great grandfather lived—a half a mile across from the highway were the Denning water tower is. They tore the house down. She painted the house from the description of someone who bought the house and land later on. She could remember enough of it—the house had no glass windows, and the kitchen was separate from the house. The doors from the old house were used in the construction of another house. English the only language spoken. Her father was a WWI veteran. Self identify—Scots Irish American. 1836—great grandfather came to Texas, got a land head right in 1841, had 1200 acres of land when he died—located near Denning (painted a picture of the old house). LeGrand—signed the Texas declaration of Independence—now she is

the only LeGrand in the county. Came from France in the late 1700s—had to leave or be killed. She researched the name of the ship—140 passengers—that the LeGrands came over on. A lot of ghost stories. Brother (Milford, passed away in 2002) flew 33 missions over Germany in WWII (Harry Noble wrote about him). Father was gassed in WWI. 89 years old on March 1, 2010. She quilts at Twin Lakes. Flower garden pattern. Her grandmother would spin cotton to make thread, also made plow lines—spun the thread and twisted them. Sell \$3,000 worth of tickets for raffling the quilt at a cemetery homecoming. POW camp in Chireno—Mrs. LeGrand was not living in Chireno at that time. Her mother cooked for the guards. Grocery store where 7 and 21 come together in Nacogdoches—this was her grandfather's store. There were several stores in this area. Her uncle had a barber shop in town on Main Street. Bus from Chireno to Nacogdoches—2-3 times a day. When Mrs. LeGrand was 12 years old, she got on the bus and went to Nacogdoches and got a haircut at her uncle's barbershop. There was a Black man who made hot tamales in Nacogdoches—daddy would buy some on Saturday. When she lived at Shady Grove, she went to Nacogdoches every week—the fair, circus, parades. Parades were on Main Street—associated with the circus. The saw mill was here (Mission Dolores Visitors Center and Museum)—she and her husband ran the commissary. Every so often they would clean up the area and scoop it up and carry it off. Probably wasn't as flat as it is now. The commissary was next to the highway. Jesse Morris and Steve \_\_\_\_\_ from Nacogdoches. Late 1950s, early 1960s worked at the commissary. One time had a circus out there—after the sawmill closed. Also little league baseball field. Describes a change in Hwy 21 just west of Denning that was made when the road was paved.



### 37. Ronnie and Donnie Butler, 3-11-10

Never saw grandfather on father's side, grandmother on father's side Sara Lily Butler, father was James Wright Butler, mother was a Jameson. R. Butler lives in the house where his father was born. He died at 92 and a half. 12 kids—9 boys and three girls—Mr. Butler is the youngest boy—born in 1930. Lived on Hwy. 21 all his life. There are several places where they cut off a curve. In 1937 they changed the road—the land has been in the family for over 100 years. Grandfather was born in 1843, and road a mule here from Gordon, Alabama. He never went back, heard from, or wrote to Gordon, Alabama. He was single when he came here—worked at first in Chireno for three years. Raised nearly everything they ate—bought sugar, baking powder, soda, and coffee—six pounds of coffee for 50 cents. A.J. Woods store—people traded by the year—the store is still there—Nelsyn Wade owns it. One pair of shoes a year. 19 cents for a straw hat. 9 cents for shoes—old split level. Never went hungry. Grandfather acquired land, 725 acres—hired people to clear the land. Had certain days they would all go to Nacogdoches or Chireno with wagons of cotton. Mr. Butler has some of the paperwork from the cotton transactions. Land cost 50 cents to four dollars an acre. Grandmother was a Mast (from Nacogdoches), lived in Chireno—had a cousin—Chicken Mast. She had parlor in the house—kept it locked up. Had a piano in the parlor. The parlor was for company. Grandfather had a picture of himself—well dressed—didn't get married until he was 51 (or 55) years old, and she was 25. In the flu days, a house owned by Jimmy MacReynold (a Texas state representative) was used as a hospital. Married in the Garrett House—the old log house that Jimmy MacReynold owns. 1927-28 when the flu epidemic hit. 100 bales of cotton in one year was the goal—made 103 bales one year—but lost money more that year than ever before. The gin was in Nacogdoches when they raised 103 bales. Cotton gin at Denning, in San Augustine, at the roadside park east of San Augustine—gins everywhere. Sara Elizabeth Mast—called Lily. Mr. Butler liked picking cotton. Picked 400 pounds a day. Ran a gas station in San Augustine for 37 years. Mr. Butler went to Chireno to the gin—one of the last gins in this part of the country. Hazel Jameson worked there. O.H. Butler had a house on the left going into Nacogdoches. Raised cabbage, onions, English peas, potatoes, butter beans—picked seven no. 3 washtubs of butter beans. From one year to another, they never ran out of canned goods. Raised sweet potatoes, made syrup. Described how the sweet potatoes were stored. Carried cotton to Nacogdoches in a pickup. Use lime to preserve potatoes. Mrs. Butler raised around Ford's Corner. Canned in cans. Put up a beef or two a year. Had a pressure cooker for canning. You could buy a yearling for five dollars. Someone would butcher a beef every Saturday morning. Uncle B. Dodd (African American, World War I veteran, drew a check) would get a hind quarter for \$2.50. The rest was cut up, put in a wagon, stop at each house and distribute the beef. People would write their name on a piece of paper. Made lye soap. Payment was in food, syrup. Have to be careful not to burn the syrup. Will Lee had a syrup mill, would bring their cane to his mill. During WWII couldn't get gallon cans, so used a 50 gallon drum to store the syrup. Things weren't better back then—you can't beat what we've got now. To pay for the movie that was set up at the schools, didn't pay money—quart of peas, 3 or 6 eggs to pay for the movie. There was talk about a lead log that stuck out of the bank of the Attoyac. A log that turned to lead. They claim that there's a 30 mule pack of gold near the bridge over the Attoyac River. Mexicans had it when they came through San Augustine, and it was thought they dumped it in the river, since they didn't have it after they had crossed the river. Mr. Butler had heard this all his life. Home remedies—sore throat, Vick's salve. Poultice of turpentine, kerosene oil, Vicks Salve grease, on a rag and put it on your chest during the night. You wore it all day if you were still sick. Calamat tablets, yellow tablets—Dr. Taylor Mast

recommended these. The medicine would do better on an empty stomach. Black draught and castor oil. Three cases of typhoid fever in his family at one time. Dr. Taylor Mast from Chireno came around, got out of his car—every time he got out of his car, he would say, “Dooooooodly Doodly Doodly Doodly Doo.” Went on to say, “Well, the Old Doc is making his rounds, and you know that the Old Doc has to eat too.” Mr. Butler’s father owed \$20 for the year. His daddy gave him the last \$20 bill he had—they were broke. Play time was at night, during the day too. Didn’t have vehicles, had to go on horseback. 1949-50, got his first vehicle. If you were walking home at night from a party with a girl—her momma might have a pine torch behind you. Went to school at Ratcliff—no school there now, moved the old school to Chireno after consolidation to be used as the gym. Now they built the new gym. Picked up arrowheads all his life on the farm. Used to be an Indian mound near his place—an Indian graveyard. Spanish in the area—Y’Barbos, lived on the Mountain—Shaws, Harris were other Spanish people. Lots of Blacks in the area—different African Americans would help on the farm. Sowell Bridge, near Broaddus, crossing over the Attoyac. Cotton Ham Bridge. There were foot log crossings over the Attoyac. No mixed marriages. His daddy didn’t want them to go with the Y’Barbo girls—prettiest girls in the country. Stay with your race. American and Texas, self identify. Never was superstitious. Mrs. Butler says their house is haunted. Over 100 years old—have old pictures of their house. Mrs. Butler has traced his ancestry. You’d starve to death fishing with hooks in Attoyac—nets work better. Plenty of people were making home brew. Told about a revenue man in Shelby who came up to a house with a little boy outside. The Revenue man asked the boy where his father was, boy said that he was making whiskey—Revenue man said “I’ll give you a dollar to take me to your father.” Boy said “give me the dollar now and I’ll take you there.” Revenue man said, “No, I’ll give you the dollar after we get back.” Boy said, “I’d like the dollar now because you aren’t coming back.” Told as a joke, but also said to be true. Bought home brew in San Augustine, Mountain. Christmas parade in San Augustine, put a still on a trailer—Clarence Fountain was with the still on the trailer. Never knew of tamales since recently—Mrs. Butler remembers the man who sold tamales—“Hot tamales, and that ain’t all” after spending time in jail for bootlegging, he said “Hot tamales, and that’s all.” Mrs. Butler’s father was a taxi driver—he was the only one around. He would drive some of the soldiers on leave back to Leesville—4 or 5 in the car. A.J. Waters farm in Chireno, POW camp. Chireno much more prosperous in the past. Used to be a well in the middle of the street in Chireno—in the middle of town. Mr. Butler—12 of us kids and all were born at home. Had a midwife, and Dr. Taylor would come out. Glory land—church had a meeting, would go in wagons. The little babies would be put in the wagons—Mr. Butler and his friends switched the babies—caused quite a stir. Mr. Butler and a cousin had an old hoopty, driving past the church, driving too fast on the gravel and started sliding—hit the door of the church and opened the door, and there were people in the church in the moaners bank, praying.

### 38. Grady Jerry Fountain, 3-17-10

Mr. Fountain is a nephew of Clarence Fountain. There is a book about Clarence Fountain. 14 children, 7 boys, 7 girls, Mr. Fountain is right in the middle. Hog killing time—would kill 20-30 hogs a day, for 2 to 3 days. First day would eat the livers, spare ribs. Smoked the hogs. Hunted and fished. Would kill ducks by the 100s—mother would cook (fry) 10 ducks for breakfast. For fifty cents, could go to the movie, buy a sack of popcorn, a sno-cone, and when they got out of the movie, would buy the biggest top cola, package of tobacco, and a comic book. Would get to town on a log truck, after sold their cross ties, then go to town. Daddy would buy light bread and wienies and the family would eat on the square. His daddy had a saw mill, also farmed with mules. Kids were used as hands on the saw mill. When they took the railroad up, had to haul the cross ties to San Augustine. The railroad went by Mr. Fountain's house twice a day—one trip north, one trip south. Camp Worth had a big school, two churches, and 100s of houses, huge commissary, and lots of Black people. The government gave each family 160 acres, pre-emption. Frost Johnson Lumber Co. Decided they had cut out all the timber, so they took up the track, sometime in the late 1940s—so most of the people left, except for two Black families and four White families. There was an unwritten rule that all the Blacks had to be on the east side of the creek after sundown, unless they were with a White family. Mr. Fountain rode the bus to school in San Augustine. He got one pair of shoes every year. Everyone had a corn patch—needed corn to feed the animals. Clip the corn stalks and feed the stalks to the animals. Would take the corn to the grist mill. Had to sift the corn flour to get the larva out. Mr. Fountain's family came from Alabama—his grandfather owned 640 acres on the Attoyac. Main means of transportation when growing up—horses, horse and buggy. His daddy was one of the first who bought the hoopties—they replaced the buggies pretty fast. There were roads everywhere, but they were roads that a hoopty could get down or a horse and buggy. The less traveled roads are gone now, many are grown up in timber. The more improved that certain roads would get, the old roads would disappear. Most of the time he would go to Center as much as go to San Augustine. Going to Nacogdoches was a two day affair. There was no 711 back then. In the winter time, Mr. Fountain went to town once a month. When the hoopty came on the scene, they had to take a team of mules to get up some hills. The main roads got better and better—the secondary roads got worse and worse. Mr. Fountain had to cross a creek to get to school—he put his clothes on his head and crossed the creek. He would stay with people while the creek was high so he wouldn't miss school. Summer time, he would go to Nacogdoches where CR 354 ends at the Attoyac, but in the winter time, had to go to Denning and hit Hwy 21. A few years ago, the highway department put in a nice concrete bridge where CR 354 ends at the Attoyac, so now no problem crossing the Attoyac here at any time of year. When they went to Nacogdoches, they would spend the night at a relative's house just the other side of Melrose. These relatives had a lot of kids. They were always back home on Sunday for church. No stories about American Indians in the area, although back then there were lots of artifacts being found, and now you don't hardly find them anymore. No stories about the Spanish in the area. African Americans in the area—200-300, farmed and worked on the railroad. Most left or moved to town. There was no prejudice except for the one rule. Rendered lard from hogs—sometimes have 50-100 one gallon jars full of lard. Couldn't afford to have photographs taken when growing up. Ironosa Community. The Hattan Book has all the Fountains in it. Another book called the Fountain Book. No mixed marriages. Mr. Fountain self-identifies as American. Storey tellers would tell ghost stories. He doesn't know of any haunted places. Never ate hot tamales. Mother would cook 40 biscuits every morning. Biscuits, syrup, pork for breakfast; in the winter it would be biscuits,

syrup, and wild game. When you ran out of wheat flour, then you'd have cornbread, butter, syrup, jelly—all kinds of jelly—grapes, pears, peaches. Mother would can 1000 jars of goods each year and that would last one year. Always had lots of company. Uncle Clarence Fountain was a professional bootlegger—lived next store to Mr. Fountain. Cut barrel staves. Mr. Fountain now holds funerals. Mr. Fountain is the only one left in his community that grew up there.

**39. Andrea C. Garcia, 3-17-10**

Esteban and Maria Rodrigues, parents. Born and raised in Hermana, Texas. Mrs. Garcia has lived in the San Augustine area (Broaddus) for 60 years. She came to the area with the construction of Lake Sam Rayburn. Making tamales—first need corn shucks. Boil the corn, wash it real good. Mrs. Garcia went to Nacogdoches to sell tamales. When she came here to Broaddus no one was selling tamales, tacos, enchiladas. At first only sold tamales in Broaddus. She didn't get a license to sell tamales in Nacogdoches. No one in San Augustine was making tamales at that time. Mrs. Garcia would sell tamales to people in San Augustine—Dr. Haley, Mr. Nelsyn Wade—she would deliver the tamales here. Did not sell tamales in Hemphill. Sold tamales \$1.20 a dozen, then went up to \$3.00 a dozen, when others would sell one dozen for \$4 and \$5. Used beef. Learned to make tamales from her mother and grandmother—cooked in a wash pot—and they sold them for 20 cents a dozen. Added lime (cal ?) to make the corn puff up and make hominy. Boracho tamale—a bigger tamale, tied together with a strip of corn shuck. 15 cents for each boracho with lots of hot pepper. When people drink they want something hot. Made tamales by herself. Mrs. Garcia likes pork tamales. Also would sell tamales in Zavalla. Quit cooking tamales commercially in 1981.

#### 40. Lavon Tindall, 3-25-10

The Tindall's came from Limestone County, Alabama, to Nacogdoches in 1852. After the war, several others came. The Tindall's married DeShazos, also from Alabama. Mr. Tindall's grandmother was a Looney. The Looney's were in DeSoto Parish, Louisiana, after the Civil War, and after the mysterious killing of a carpetbagger, the Looney's moved on to Nacogdoches County. Her grandmother was a Parrot—came from Tennessee. The Parrotts came in 1843, and also settled in Nacogdoches County, on Wander Creek between Nacogdoches and Garrison. So that's how Mr. Tindall qualified as a Son of the Republic of Texas. This place looked like Tennessee and Alabama. Mr. Tindall's father was Nathan Lavon Tindall, better known as N.L. Tindall. His mother was Rachel Marie Fountain. His father was born in Nacogdoches County, the Tindalls moved to San Augustine County in the 1930s to the New Hope Community on the Attoyac—farmed right along the river bottom. The Fountains lived in Spring Ridge or Camp Worth, or Fountain Town. So his parents didn't live too far apart—met before the war, his father went off to war, married when he got back. Mr. Tindall was born in November of 1947. Mr. Tindall speaks the same way they do back in Tennessee and Alabama. His grandfather didn't say "yellow" he said "yeller." Mr. Tindall was visiting Tennessee with a group performing a historical play, and local woman who were quilting said his speech pattern sounded like he was from Tennessee. Sam Houston came to Samuel Sublet's house to recover from a shot in the ankle from San Jacinto. Mr. Tindall's grandfather was born in 1901, grandmother born in 1905, both born in Nacogdoches County—Tindalls were in the Alazan community, and the Looneys were in the Harmony community. Grandmother had a large family—her father was very strict. All the girls ran away to get married except the youngest, who married after her father died. Both Mr. Tindall's grandparents were part Indian. In the 19 teens, only a few people had cars in the area. The judge in Nacogdoches would not marry Mr. Tindall's grandparents because Mr. Looney did not know of the wedding, so Mr. Tindall's grandparents went to Lufkin and got married—her father's brother let on that he was her father and the judge in Lufkin married them. The grandparents stayed at various places until Mr. Looney cooled down. Two years went by, Mr. Tindall's father was born. The grandmother of Mr. Tindall's grandmother was full blood Indian and big into the herbal medicine, although his grandmother was not. Grandmother—BS and AS, Before Saved, After Saved, she was Pentecostal. Everyone called her granny—granny was a prayer warrior—she had feelings about when people needed help. Took some calves with his grandparents to the auction at Nacogdoches—Mr. Tindall was about seven (in the 1950s). Granny had a feeling at the auction and started praying. One by one, the men took their hats off, and finally the auction stopped—granny finished praying, and the auction resumed—nobody ever said a word. There was respect for granny praying. N.L. Tindall entered the military, was the oldest of two brothers, the younger brother stayed home. Granny had a feeling when N.L. Tindall was wounded.

Mr. Tindall's mother was a Fountain, so Clarence Fountain was Mr. Tindall's great uncle. Clarence Fountain's way of making a living later in his life was bootlegging. Mr. Tindall's father was the sheriff. Mr. Tindall told about when he was squirrel hunting near the Attoyac, heard hollering, saw a homemade hog trap with a big boar hog (400 pounds) and Clarence inside. Clarence had a knife and was attempting to cut the hog's throat. Mr. Tindall and his cousin shot the hog. Another time, Mr. Tindall was duck hunting, winter, had shot some ducks that were now in the water, Clarence came up behind him and asked if he was going to get the ducks, Mr. Tindall said the water was too cold. Clarence carried Mr. Tindall on his shoulders and just when Mr. Tindall had grabbed

all the ducks, Clarence dumped him in the water, saying, “Son, you are going to have to toughen up.” Clarence didn’t cut wood for heating after Christmas. Mr. Tindall and his cousin moved the gallon jugs of moonshine hidden in certain places, as a joke, but it wasn’t that funny to Clarence. There were 27 gallon jugs out there in 27 different places. Another story, squirrel hunting, Mr. Tindall and a friend came across Clarence’s still—they had smelled something—it was a 55 gallon drum sticking out of the canyon bank. There were good springs around. This was a very isolated area—a mile and a half from the main road. After they walked away a voice called out, “Put your gun down.” “Put it down or I’ll kill you where you stand.” There was a gun barrel in a pile of leaves—Clarence was in the pile. Clarence cussed them out.

**41. Mary Fussell Nichols, 3-25-10**

Mrs. Nichols went out to Denning when she was 17 years old. She is not kin to Billy Neal Fussell. Her parents were Robert E. Lee and Lenny Fussell (Helms). She lived on Chapel Hill, near Ford's Corner. She remembers when Hwy. 21 was not paved. The road was moved in the MacMahon Chapel area. She went to school, learned how to read and write, had gardens, and farmed. After she married, they had a cotton farm, started with mules to plow and then got a tractor. They went to Nacogdoches, picked up workers, and brought them back to pick cotton. They had a smoke house, made sausage, cracklings, lard from hogs. Churned butter. Home remedies—Vicks salve, coal oil for the croup, had a weed called tred side (?)—you take the center out and put it on a string and wear it around the neck to prevent croup. It has thorns on it, it's sticky so you need to wear gloves. Church, play parties (play different games—drop the handkerchief, dominoes) dances. Niece (Carolyn) and Nephew visited. Family still owns the land. Mrs. Fussell was born in San Augustine County, her father was born in the Ironosa community. She travelled in a wagon—came to San Augustine. They made syrup, husband had a syrup mill at Denning. No stories about Indians, never found arrowheads. Spanish started to come in the area in the 1950s. African Americans had their own community up at Rocky Mount—segregated. She has pictures of her old house at her home. Mixed marriages not common. Funerals were in the home. American—self identifies. No superstitions. No tamales.



## 42. E.L. Luna, 3-31-10

Peggy Jasso also participated in the interview. Mr. Luna started by saying that he is a Catholic, a Democrat, and a Union man. He retired from the paper mill in Lufkin and was president of the union. He grew up in the Fern Lake community. He went to the Fern Lake School, and has been here 94 years. Years ago the road was highway 35—a gravel road, when they paved it, they changed it to Hwy. 59. Guy Blount Road—Mr. Luna lived on this road. He went to town in a wagon—the well outside his house is 150 years old. Mr. Luna bought groceries in town—Novel Bright owned the grocery store. Most of the time, Mr. Luna's dad and himself would go to town. There were half a dozen teams with wagons in this area. They went to town once every 2-3 weeks. This was cotton country—corn, cotton, potatoes. The kids picked the cotton—about 500 pounds to the bale. Guy Blount had a cotton gin, this is where Mr. Luna's family would take their cotton. He could pick about 150 pounds a day. Mr. Luna's mother would pick cotton. They plowed with mules. They had cows, pigs, hogs. They had a vegetable garden, cabbage, carrots, field peas, watermelons. Corn was for the mules. The barn was called a corn crib. Sweet potatoes, Irish potatoes. To store the potatoes, they would dig a big hole under the house, to keep them cool. The hole was called a tater bank. Will Casterberry was the doctor, had chill tonic—very bitter, buy from the pharmacy—run by Stripling, then Hazelwood. Black draught, take it to keep from getting sick—buy it at the store. Home remedies—Mr. Luna's daddy boiled some bark off the red oak tree—don't know what it was for. Had their own meat—killed a shoat, weighed about 100 pounds, cleaned the pot real good, put water and salt in the pot—then smoked the meat. Canned peas, tomatoes—everything that grew in the garden—they used mason jars. Mr. Luna's son John came to visit. To treat poison ivy—bought something from drugstore. 1779 is when Mr. Luna's family came to the area. Blood line came in from the east coast out of Spain. His parents and grandparents grew cotton. No one grows cotton anymore. American Indians—Mr. Luna said that they claim that they have some Caddo Indian in them. Laird's Funeral Home, picture on the wall. If someone died, they would be dressed at the house. One of Mr. Luna's grandfathers is buried at Oak Grove Cemetery, his grandmother is buried at Moral community cemetery. The Procella cemetery is to the south. Mr. Luna Doesn't know when the Procella cemetery started. Mr. Luna speaks Spanish—he and his wife would speak Spanish in front of their children when they didn't want their children to know what they were talking about. Mr. Luna took Spanish in high school, but it was a different kind of Spanish than what he learned growing up. When he was little, everyone in the area spoke Spanish. Mr. Luna learned English when he went to school at seven years old. There was a Catholic school right here—there was a house that was torn down, the church bought the property and built a school—St. Ann. Frank Rodrigues and Mr. Luna would haul water out of the well to the public school, one two gallon bucket at a time, because sometimes the cistern at the school would go dry. Mr. Luna played softball and hopscotch a lot, marbles a lot. By the time he was 15, he started singing—his daddy paid \$5 dollars for a guitar from Robert Mead. His father could play guitar, so Mr. Luna learned from him. Mr. Luna was on the Porter Wagner Show, Port Arthur, Texas. He used to sing in honkey tonks, sang in church. Sang with a band out of Louisiana Hayride—Red Saline—had a big band. But Mr. Luna was working at the paper mill, so he declined the offer. They went to Louisiana Hayride, Mr. Luna's son was put under the rope and shook hands with Elvis Presley. Mr. Luna played for a lot of dances. Harvey and Frank Lazerine played the fiddle. No one today plays the fiddle. The dances would be in someone's house or in the school house. The good old days are now—you don't have to pull water from the well, you just go to the kitchen and turn the faucet, but the happy days were back then

when the family was all together. First car he drove—1925 Model T. He was about 10 years old—his daddy showed him how to drive. Not too many had cars back then—wagons and a team, and buggies. African Americans—Blount had several Black families working for him—they had their own school. 35-40 Black people working for him. The school was right next to the cotton gin. Maybe SFA owns the land where the Blount Farm was located. Mr. Luna's daddy helped build Blount Lake. Mr. Luna has pictures of when he was an altar boy. Bottom row: Frankie Garcie (now Crane), E.L. Luna, J.L. Cordova, Claude Gonzales, back row left to right, Charlie Paske, Robert Payer, Barnard Payer, Leo Rodrigues—E.L. Luna is the only one living. Got along well with neighbors. Sometimes, deaths were not reported. Four deputies in those days—Sheriff now has 22 deputies. Sheriffs were Gene Vault, Carl Butler. Children of E.L. Luna—Kevin, Maryann, and John (visiting today). Mr. Luna self identified as Spanish. Tamales—an Indian dish. Boil the corn. They had a metate to make the masa. Later on the people started boiling the corn. Started a restaurant. No one has a metate in the area. Made hog head hot tamales. Mrs. E.L. Luna had a metate. But in the restaurant, they mixed Boston butt and chicken—ground them together—for tamales. When Mr. Luna went to Mexico and ordered a bowl of chili—he got a bowl of chili pepper—chili is Texas food, not Mexican. No places that are haunted. Peggy—Aunt Mary Jane talked about the evil eye, brujeria. John mentioned an area where you could go and hear the horses running—they'd hear a wagon and team coming through at a spring, but when they got to the spring, the sound would disappear—happened one time. John owns part of Trammel's Trace on his land. E.L.'s wife could witch for water—use green limbs—how they found the wells, John said that other people would ask her to find water. If you travelled toward Lufkin, there was a board bridge (3x12) across the bottom. An island was at the fork of the river. Mr. Luna didn't travel up and down the Angelina River when he was a boy. Henson Island.

### 43. Geraldine DuPree, 6-17-10

Felix Holmes brought us to Mrs. Dupree's house. Mrs. Dupree's father was Jefferson Jenkins, mother was Annie Mims. Home remedies—used mullein tea, pine top. There was a church and school at Black Ankle community where Mrs. Dupree grew up. She left at 18 years old when she married Joe Dupree—Felix Holmes' uncle. Joe Dupree was raised at Black Ankle. Mrs. Dupree went to beauty school in Tyler. Her daddy had a car. No stories of Indians or arrow heads. Her mother did not cook—Mrs. Dupree did the cooking. Didn't make or like hot tamales. Her Uncle Joe worked at the Sturgis Saw Mill until it shut down. No photographs of the places where Ms. Dupree lived. Ewen Dupree photograph—from Louisiana, Cane River—brother of Uncle Joe Dupree. Uncle Joe's parents came from Louisiana. Ms. Dupree made quilts. Didn't have much time for fun—just did what she had to do to help the family. Eleven brothers and sisters—she's the second one. Ms. Dupree did the cooking, washing, and ironing. Did the washing and ironing for the Wade Café in San Augustine. Will Wade—they were good people to work for. All the other children could play, but Mrs. Dupree couldn't—she had to raise the children. Her father had a car, rode to church—always went to church. Mrs. Dupree loved to hoe cotton, to chop cotton. Not work to her. Went to chop cotton with her husband and baby, didn't have a nurse, put the baby down on a quilt and turned the chair, laid his head on the quilt, under a big pecan tree and with a yellow dog—the yellow dog would lay down beside the baby. But if there was a racket, the dog would raise up to check things out. Mrs. Dupree had to go chop wood—she got her poppa's axe, you could cut timber anywhere then. She cut a pole, put it on her shoulder, brought it home, cut the pole and built a fire—set the smoothing iron next to the fire, and then ironed clothes. Ms. Dupree like ironing—it was as hard as it is now. Poppa would cut wood for the fireplace. Sisters were taking in ironing with their mother, they would take the clothes from Will Wade's café to the house to iron. That was a full time job. Her mother worked at the café cleaning, but brought the clothes back to the house to wash and iron. Mother drove to San Augustine to work at the café and to bring clothes back to Black Ankle to wash and iron.

#### 44. Le Juan Garrett, 7-21-10

Mrs. Garrett's Dad grew up in Geneva, his family moved to Black Jack. Her father loved to play baseball—that's how he met her mother. Mrs. Garrett's parents got the mail route from Chireno to Black Jack, moved to Chireno. There was depot near their house, and the lady there (Mrs. Whitton) would take care of Mrs. Garrett while her parents worked. Her Daddy drove a school bus and a lumber truck mainly in the summer, mother ran the mail route. Mrs. Whitton would take Mrs. Garrett to the movie Thursday night in Chireno. Mother had a Black lady who cleaned for her, Lolabee. Didn't have electricity before WWII so Mrs. Garrett's older brother and sister had to read by lantern to do their school work, but they had electricity when Mrs. Garrett started school around 1946. Walked to school with older brother and sister, all walked home for lunch when food was scarce—the school was about a mile away—the bus didn't pick up anyone under two miles in those days. At the end Mrs. Garrett's father got a job driving a dump truck for the county, so he always drove a truck. Her Mother gardened, had a milk cow, chickens, a pig they would raise, put in the smoke house—sausage and lard. Her Daddy built stilts for fun. They played Annie Over. Kids were outside all the time. Mother had a kerosene stove and a wood stove—Mrs. Garrett baked some of her mud pies in the kerosene stove. Played cards with her sister—7up, battle, Old Maid, Go Fish. Played trucks with younger brother. Valedictorian in 12<sup>th</sup> grade, went to SFA. Mrs. Garrett's Mother ran youth center in Chireno. Kids liked to dance. Cousins would spend the night. Had a great aunt in Lufkin, would visit in the summer. Daddy loved to play Forty-Two so they all played Forty-Two (dominoes). They churned ice cream on the front porch. Had a push mower, not motorized, Mrs. Garrett would mow people's yards for 75 cents. The bus brought the Daily Sentinel every day—would walk to town and pick up the paper every day. Would do things with friends after church on Sunday—skate on the sidewalk, walk on the railroad trestle. Before she started at SFA, went with her sister to Nacogdoches and got a permanent in her hair. Bus stops between Chireno and Nacogdoches—Gas at Ralph's Store, four miles up, about four more miles a store at Sand Hill, about four more miles there was gas and a store at Melrose, about four more another store, then near town a stop at Eggnog Branch. Caught bus in the morning in Chireno and came back in the evening. Cost 10 cents to ride the bus, 10 cents to get in the movie. Mrs. Garrett's Daddy's parents moved to Nacogdoches. She spent Sunday afternoon in Nacogdoches. There was an ice plant in Nacogdoches—could stop there and get ice cream—close to the creek on the east side of Nacogdoches. On Saturday, her mother provided taxi service, 50-75 cents, gave a ride to people coming into town to buy groceries and supplies. Mother would trade for coupons for gas and tires because she carried the mailed and liked to taxi folks. Black Jack had a post office then. Mrs. Garrett's first driving experience—with a cousin, Mrs. Garrett put the car in reverse and couldn't get it into another gear, so she put on the brake and her cousin went and got mother. At 13, her younger brother had a lot of illness, she would drive the pick-up to school taking her brother to school. Mrs. Garrett got a hardship drivers license at 13 years of age. She drove a 1950 Chevrolet pick-up. Her Daddy was a guard at the Chireno POW camp, the guards would make her and her sister little wooden shoes—she was about five years old. Mrs. Garrett donated these wooden shoes to the Half Way Inn in Chireno. The train quit coming to Chireno when Sam Rayburn Lake came in. In Chireno, there were three grocery stores, one pressing shop—the smaller grocery store would give you a free drink if you brought your all A report card. In Chireno there was a Post Office, café, filling station—had caskets in it. They had an ice box. Probably had to push her bike up the hill to Chireno, but then could ride it back down—had a basket on her bike to carry things. The road was not paved at the time she lived there. Went to SFA, majored in

elementary education, graduated in 1960, went to teach in Orange, got married, moved to Houston, taught there for a year, taught in Broaddus for 5 years, and then taught in Chireno for 25 years. Always have meals when someone dies—about 20 ladies cooking—big families come back for funerals. Everyone in Mrs. Garrett's class moved away. Her Daddy had a pond built behind the house, when she was eleven, learned to swim. Her Mother's daddy died when she was two—he was a smithy who came from Arkansas to work in the saw mill. Their mother, Matty, took them and lived in Chireno, remarried Alan Travis. Alan Travis' spinster sister Pearl told Mrs. Garrett that when they came to Chireno there were Indians camped on the Alamaderas Creek. Mrs. Garrett's Daddy's family came to Milam and got a head right just a few months before Texas became a state in 1845. They moved to Geneva and farmed, then moved to Black Jack, and then to Nacogdoches. Her Daddy's family had the mail route at Black Jack. They had a little store on Burgess Poultry parking lot. Mrs. Garrett's Daddy inherited it and ran it. [Power outage at Mission Dolores—put batteries in recorder] Home remedies—kerosene for cuts. When she first went to school, Mrs. Garrett had a “stomach ache” everyday, her older brother gave her castor oil that stopped the “stomach aches.” They had a vacuum shift car going to SFA—drove that Chevrolet all through college. When 12 years old, walking home from school, a tornado came, watched the church get blown away, she held on to the fence watching it go by. Everybody had someone old living with them in those days. They went to Etoile for the homecomings—had a Model T, a sandy road, had to take something to get the sand away from the tires, Mother and Father would push, older brother or sister would drive. Grandmother Matty—her great grandmother was a Cherokee, lived on highway 7. Mother always said they had the high cheek bones like the Cherokee. Spanish—still a woman who was a Chireno. Artesian well where Old Chireno established his plantation. Still Mexican families that live around the Catholic Church. Black people lived in Chireno. They graded a road and helped them build houses—called New Town—for the Black people. Blacks were bussed up the road to Sand Hill—can't remember a school for Blacks in Chireno. Only English spoken. Everybody had to feed the preacher. Kids had to wait until the adults finished eating. Self identify—American. Garrett—husband's dad's daddy's family came from Louisiana. Store. Hot tamales—not in Chireno. When brother (10 years older) entered the air force, Mrs. Garrett made a trip to San Antonio in 1951, learned she was car sick—didn't know how to prevent it at the time—look straight out the front window, instead of looking out the side. Places that were haunted—on highway 21—would see a well dressed gentleman in the front room. He might have been one of those Yankees who walked from Galveston up through Chireno, and some of them were sick and died, and they just put them in the upper cemetery and put rocks on them, they didn't bury them. Second house on the left past the light on 21 toward Nacogdoches. The Half Way Inn is not haunted. Sam Houston would stay in the Half Way Inn. When Mrs. Garrett was little, Saturday night, men used to drink and fight in Chireno, so it was dangerous to go to Chireno then. All those men have moved away. Brother used to hitchhike to Nacogdoches, but not Mrs. Garrett. Chireno Historical Society—formed 18-20 years ago, when going to tear down the old church, rolled it back when they built the new church—met in the old church. The city of Chireno bought the property and moved the Half Way Inn there—worked on it 10 years before they could start showing it. Tramps would come by and knock on the back door, mother would give them something to eat. Gypsies would camp by the Creek, would ride horses into Chireno, sharpen knives, play music, barter for horses—early 1940s, come in the fall of the year. Started moving with the circuses. Had a medicine show come to Chireno. Sold salt water taffy candy. Gypsies—seems like they had some big old cars. Would mend a cooking pot. Mother climbed the fire tower, woods chapel area, west of Chireno, on a sunny day, could tell the difference

between smoke from a forest fire and smoke from stills (had white smoke that spiraled up). Mrs. Garrett's mother's step father would get on the fire tower near San Augustine, and he always delivered milk to people in Chireno.

#### 45. Levi Evett, 7-28-10

Mr. Evett Lived at Orange during WWII—welder. He cut logs, plow until midnight. They killed their own hogs, cattle. They had a smoke house, had screens so that a fly couldn't get in. John Evett—grandfather—settled 370 acres where Mr. Evett is now. Mr. Evett plowed with mules up until 1945. Bought a tractor in 1950—still has it, and it still runs—uses it as a garden tractor. Growing chickens since 1957—uses chicken fertilizer. Built eight chicken houses himself. Older brother had a 1927 Chevrolet pickup. Married for 58 years. Walked to San Augustine. First car was a Model A Ford, bought it in 1937, at 17 years old. Paid \$150 for the Model A Ford. You might take half a day getting up the roads around here. Put 1300 pounds of picked cotton on a wagon, took to Denning—cotton gin, steam powered. 1948 got electricity. Mr. Evett built his first house with a hand saw—twenty windows. Learned how to sharpen a hand saw—paid three dollars and six bits for the hand saw—bought it from hardware store in San Augustine (Deke Thomas). Mr. Evett still has the hand saw. Mr. Evett described the way highway 21 was maintained before it was paved—a drag, pulled by mules, to smooth the road. Two stores at Denning—Ross, Nicholas, two blacksmith shops, could get your meal ground (corn meal) at Denning. Denning was a handy place to get supplies, but went to San Augustine and Chireno. A dime for possum hides. Could buy a sack of meal for thirty cents. 48 pound sack of flour for 48 cents. Also bought sugar. Mr. Evett has seen the Attoyac frozen over. Cotton Ham Bridge. If the river was up, you couldn't go that way. Eight children in his family—Mr. Evett was the youngest boy. Fished in the Attoyac—caught goo, drum. Mr. Evett built a 12 long boat. Grew peas, corn, and an acre of sweet potatoes. Home remedies—Vick's salve, meat grease, sassafras tea. A chicken snake had gotten into a woodpecker nest—a friend of Mr. Evett climbed a tree to get woodpecker eggs, and the chicken snake lunged toward him and made him fall out of the tree—knocked him out, but he finally came to. Church—went to Attoyac Church. Pentecostals came in, had brush arbors, but the Attoyac Church was here all along. Indians—no stories, but would find Indian artifacts when hoeing nearby—found some good arrowheads. Spanish—a few way back. African Americans—in the area. Mr. Evett's grandfather was from Alabama, he never mentioned his parents, and he came to Limestone County at first. Someone gave him a baby on the way over to Texas, he had three sisters, all unmarried, and Mr. Evett's grandfather told his sisters to give the baby to someone else, because people will think it's theirs, and it would go against them, so they gave the baby to someone who lived next to the railroad tracks. They ran into the Goodens, and Mr. Evett's grandfather married a Gooden. 1196 to Denning, seven miles—Mr. Evett and his brothers dragged the road—they didn't get paid for the work, but they maintained the road—straightened places, filled mud holes. Self Identify—has a little Louisiana (coonie), on mother's side (Murphy), also has a little Indian on daddy's side (doesn't know the tribe, very little). A two teacher school, Neally School was the closest, another school was a couple miles away, and Melvin School (two teacher school) was also nearby. Spanish families—yes, but can't remember their last names—Mr. Evett was very young at the time. White Rock Road. Highway 21 has changed. City Lake Road—met a log truck with a trailer—knocked his mirror. Hot tamales—no. No places that were haunted, no ghost stories. In the 1930s, it was very dangerous in San Augustine, McClanahans and Burlasons. Bonnie and Clyde were killed at Joaquin—Clyde had kin over there. Mr. Evett saw the car, a 1934 Ford. Bonnie and Clyde lit a little fire near Mr. Evett's brother's house. Place where Bonnie and Clyde were practicing shooting, near a still, up toward Rusk. Mr. Evett has seen many stills in the woods around here. Mr. Evett was cutting trees at Poly Farm on Patroon and ran into a still owned by a Black man—camouflaged it with tree tops.





#### 46. Carl Shaw, 8-4-10

Mr. Shaw's Mother grew up in Fort Worth, Texas, she had gone to school and was becoming a registered nurse. She came to Nacogdoches to visit a sister and met Mr. Shaw's father, Verna Shaw, V.D. Shaw. V.D. Shaw was raised by Pete Y'Barbo—called him Uncle Pete. Mr. Shaw born in 1937, parents married in 1928, Carl was the 5<sup>th</sup> child, there were three after him. Mr. Shaw's father never owned land until many years later—he was a tenant farmer. Cotton was a big thing, but they grew a little bit of everything. They didn't have much growing up, but years later when he was working in the White House for three presidents, Mr. Shaw never forgot his humble beginnings. Home remedies—mother was a registered nurse—doesn't remember specifics. Dailey life—not interested in sports—Mr. Shaw liked to read and do things to move himself on in life. He liked to watch sports. He worked for several newspapers—Nacogdoches, Lufkin, Longview, Irving. Mr. Shaw ran the re-election campaign for a Texas congressman in the 1960s. Mr. Shaw became a PR person in Washington for Mr. Doughty. Then Mr. Shaw went to Dept. of Interior, but not at first in the BIA. He did advance work for the president—Nixon, Ford, and Reagan. Mr. Shaw was Director of Public Affairs for BIA. Mr. Shaw's mother's grandfather came from Oklahoma—he was Cherokee. Mother's dad's name was Cordova. Lazerines, Cordovas, Smiths in the area. Mr. Shaw remembers travelling to Nacogdoches in a wagon before the road was paved. Highway 21 is basically the same place it is now. Mr. Shaw's Father got his first pick-up, worked for the gas company—United Gas. They lived just east of Melrose. Later moved closer to Nacogdoches, in 10<sup>th</sup> grade in Nacogdoches, worked for a dairy barn, milked 60 cows in the morning and milked 60 cows after school. Got paid \$15 a week—the early 1950s. A little store—Oak Ridge—just past 226. Mr. Shaw worked there on weekends—used electric milking machines. American Indians in the area—no. Spanish in the area—Mr. Shaw was called Mexican. Mr. Shaw's father said that four men from Spain got off a boat in New Orleans, and one of these men was the ancestor of Mr. Shaw's father. No one in the family does genealogy. Mr. Shaw was born in a house just off of 353 where four roads come together. Orin Smith had an African American family working for him. Mr. Shaw doesn't remember the family name—all got along well. English was the only language spoken. Self identify—American. Ghost stories—doesn't remember specifics. Mr. Shaw's Mother made tamales.

#### 47. Raymond Goggan, 8-11-10

First talked about information from Miss Pearl Donegan (nee Parker). Born and raised in Houston—outside the city limits, 68 years old. Was interested in conservation, enrolled in the Forestry program at SFA in the Fall of 1961. In early November, mother had died of a heart attack. Mr. Goggan left SFA after his first year. Returned to SFA, didn't like the dorms the first time around, and so looked for other housing arrangements when he returned. Looked for an apartment off-campus. Went looking for an apartment on Fredonia Street, but somehow ended up on North Street and saw a sign for a room for rent. Miss Donnegan (in her 80s) had just put out the sign an hour before. She said she didn't usually rent to college students, only to people who might stay 15-20 years, but she showed him the room and he decided to stay—it was a beautiful room. Roomed with Charles. Though the years, Charles and Mr. Goggan would sit and listen to stories from Miss Donnegan. She was born in 1879 in San Augustine, on her granddaddy's plantation on the Ayish Bayou, SW of San Augustine. She and her brother were orphaned when she was five years old. Father died of food poisoning, and mother died in childbirth. Granddaddy was a Parker. She remembered staying at the Half Way Inn in Chireno on trips to Nacogdoches. She rode the stagecoach from San Augustine to Nacogdoches—remembers eating blackberry pie at the Half Way Inn. Married when she was 21, January 4, 1900. Her husband bought the house for her in Nacogdoches—the nicest house in Nacogdoches at the time—he was several years older than her and a merchant in town. A.Y. Donegan ran a business in town. Had to fill in before they built the house—was used as a dump in the 1800s. Mr. Donegan sold syrup. So many of the people were suspicious of whether they would get the full amount of syrup, that they always brought their own jug. Mr. Donegan took four wagon loads of jugs when he started filling in the area, and maybe at least 40 wagon loads of dirt. Had sheep that were kept there—named Ike and Mamie, after the Eisenhauers. She would have them sheared and they would send her back a wool blanket. When Mr. Goggan was there, one of the sheep died, and when he dug a hole to bury it, there was lots of glass and pottery where he was digging. Now there is a business complex there. Grandfather took control the plantation, gathered the slaves and said there was a certain amount of work that had to be done. As long as the work was done, he would not interfere with their lives. He set up a self-governing body for the slaves. Set up rules and regulations. If someone was found guilty, there was prescribed punishment. Her grandfather was fairly small. Had a separate kitchen on the plantation. Meat was killed every week. The cotton was usually taken all the way to Shreveport, because they would get a better price for it. Farmers in the area would form caravans for safety. Her grandfather was always in charge of the caravan—he would negotiate for the cotton price for the whole group. When her grandfather was too sick to make the trip, the Black overseer for her grandfather was elected to take his place—negotiate a price for the cotton, and divide up the money when they returned to San Augustine—this was unusual at the time. The story of the Sam Houston trees that were in Miss Donegan's yard. Two cottonwood (possibly sycamore) trees side by side near the drive on North Street. During the 1915 hurricane, these two trees looked like they were going to fall. She figured that these two trees had to go, so she had them cut down—she didn't know that these were Sam Houston trees—there was an uproar when she cut them. The story goes that Sam Houston had broken off either a cottonwood or sycamore limb in the hill country to use as a switch for his horse. And someone took the switch, broke it in half, and put halves in the ground and they took root. Also, when Mrs. Donegan was young she had met a woman who was a girlfriend of Sam Houston when she was young. Mrs. Donegan also told about the first automobile in Nacogdoches. The man who owned it was driving it didn't know how to cut

it off, so he drove around the square in Nacogdoches for hours until he ran out of gas. Every so often he would yell out, "If anyone knows how to stop this thing, please jump on!" Not long after that, there was a Black man who bought an automobile. He charged people one dollar a ride. The only pavement was brick. From downtown, he would go Mound Street up to King Street, go over to North Street and come back to town—people were lined up to get a ride. Story about the sheriff—had a reputation for being an honest man, but it was the sheriff who had told her the story—she said it was a ridiculous story, but that it was the sheriff who had told her, and he said it was true. In the late teens or early twenties, a couple from Beaumont or Houston came up and were driving around looking for land to buy to put in a saw mill. They had been on the Angelina River, and they told the sheriff when they were on the Angelina River, way back in the woods, they came across a cabin with a panther tied to a tree, but the panther had a human head. An old lady came out of the cabin with a shot gun and ran them off. The sheriff went out and when he came back, he said it was true. The last story from Miss Donegan. The 1968 book *Gunsmoke in the Redlands*, mentioned a feud going on since about 1900. She always went to San Augustine once or twice a month to visit old friends. She knew all the people back then. The book says Core Parker shot the Black gunfighter, although the uncle claimed he did it. Miss Donegan's nephew was Knight Parker. 403 North Street was the address of the house, to the north and west was the first Baptist Church. Somebody bought the house and moved it. Brookline School—Jasper county. Sabine County Historical Survey Committee—Charles Fletcher was a member and Mr. Goggan joined too, and that's how he got involved in the Gaines House. He came across the newspaper clipping for the old city at SFA Library—was intrigued then, and has been intrigued ever since. The McGowan Gaines house was donated to the survey committee—they had found some land to put it on. They dismantled the house, had the logs numbered, the forest service had provided land, but the project collapsed. When Mr. Goggan was in his forties, had been basically laid off at Brookshire Brothers. He did a travel guide on *El Camino Real*, focused on it as a region—from Nacogdoches to Natchitoches. he did cover his cost, but that was it. He also got involved in the stamp issue—trying to get a postage stamp to commemorate the 300 year commemoration of the Camino real. The stamp was not approved, but they did get a series of cancellations from points along the route. Mr. Goggan's wife's family—didn't get an indoor toilet until she was 13 years old. Her Father grew up around Patroon and her mother grew up around East Hamilton, He was a Self and she was a Riceinger. Father grew up in a cabin without any screen windows—too far off the road, didn't have bottom land, had hill side land. When they cleared they burned the trees and spread the ashes—similar to slash and burn in the tropics. Malaria was common back there—Mr. Self went through a lot of life not getting enough to eat. Mrs. Self's family was about as poor, but her father grew more garden stuff and they ate better. Mrs. Self said that they only had one pair of boots, and one winter, the person who went outside wore the boots. Mr. Self went through the sixth grade, and Mrs. Self went through the fourth. Mr. Self had worked on the Tee Beau ranch. Many of the men who didn't go to the war, ended up in jail—fighting and drinking. Beer joints—the one in Brookline was called the Bloody Bucket—illegal, but every community had one. Fights between rural gangs, family based. *Gunsmoke in the Redlands* was talking about violence in the area in the 1900s, but in the 1930s there was a much worse situation in San Augustine—two large gangs fighting—[the MacClanahans and the Burlesons]. Mr. Self worked in a CCC camp—the camp was on Highway 21 across from the King cemetery (Mr. Goggan has a photo of the camp). During the Republic of Texas, two women were hung in Sabine County—two slaves (mother and daughter), had killed their owner, who was very abusive and everyone knew it. Rather than hang the two women, someone got the idea to sell them in Louisiana. They were on their way to Louisiana and

women escaped and returned to Sabine County saying essentially that they would prefer hanging to living in slavery, so they were hung. The owner of the slaves (Jefferson Wilson) also owned property that Mr. Goggan now owns. Judge Harper related this story to Mr. Goggan. Hoody Powell, retired, made axe handles, near Pineland—used hickory. Told Mr. Goggan a story about slavers coming through the area. Old road cuts—didn't really do any field surveys, relied on maps. 1794 a short cut near Geneva was made. Judge Harper said he didn't know how old the Gaines house was, but it was at least around since 1826 since it was used as a reference point. Last reference Mr. Goggan knows of to Lobonilla ranch is in 1786-86. Perfirmo bought the property about 10 years later. The house that Mr. Goggan took pictures of was attributed to Perfirmo—but the house has now fallen down. There was a red wolf living in the house—Mr. Goggan almost stepped on the wolf when he entered the house. Mr. Goggan talked briefly about the old lost city in Sabine County. Diary from the Civil War, 1864, soldier coming through San Augustine. American Indians in the area—no stories. Weldon MacDaniel would be a good person to talk to. Mentioned Shacklefoot—headquarters of LaFitte—had plowed up some old Spanish coins in this area. Barbara Goggan joined us. Tamales—didn't know of anyone who made them. Raymond worked as a substitute postal carrier in the area. Mentioned two piles of stones that looked like graves near the Palo Gaucho. Tebo Creek—a French name. The stone purse, a sheriff in Jasper told the story. Mr. Goggan shared the original plates for a newspaper about history along the Camino real in the area. Home remedies—Mr. Hamilton told Mr. Goggan about some, he has them written down—will share these. Barbara's family—her father-in-law's grandfather was known as the Old Indian, lived around Geneva. Talked about the "Nations" in Oklahoma. William Fox, name of the grandfather. Raymond knows Barbara's family's stories.

[SFA minor in geography, graduated in 1966.]

#### 48. Felix Holmes, 8-18-10

Parents—Felix Holmes and Luella DuPree Holmes, mothers, has three kids, a boy Cedric and two girls, Tashae and \_\_\_\_\_. Father came from Center, Texas, mother came from Black Ankle community, her parents came from Louisiana—grandfather from Cheneyville, LA and grandmother came from the Red River area. Went to the Tommy Johnson School. Mr. Holmes' dad died when he was five years old. And His mother was run over by a car when he was 8 years old. Mr. Holmes raised himself. Phillip Daniel had a chicken farm, and taught Mr. Holmes how to drive, how to ride a tractor. Clarence Winn—helped him cut, load and stack wood for a dollar a load. Catch chickens at night, and try to go to school during the day. At age 16, went to work at the Forest Service. Stayed with the Forest Service for 36 years—ran dozers, fought fires, equipment mechanic. Grandparents farmed in Black Ankle, raised cows, and raised cotton. Father was a bus driver and ran a little café. Also had a dump truck. Worked at the Ford place as a mechanic. Local food sources—grew gardens. Home remedies—castor oil, liniments, put some kind of oil on the burn, ketchup tea, sassafras tea—Mr. Holmes still makes it. Dries out the roots. Did not do anything with the sassafras leaves. Also used snakeroot—they would dig it and sell it by the pound. Aloe Vera root on burns. Church—Baptist, didn't play sports because had to work. Tommy Johnson school is still standing, owned by a lawyer. Integrated in 1964, but Tommy Johnson was still used until 1969. Mr. Holmes then went to Hemphill and graduated there. Old Roads in the area—used to be a dirt wagon road where he lives, now is paved. American Indians in the area—can't remember finding arrowheads where he grew up. No Spanish. Old pictures—has a picture of his mother, and is searching for a picture of his father when he was in the army. English was the only language spoken in his family. Neighbors took care of Mr. Holmes—fed and disciplined when needed. Mr. Holmes would help his Uncle Joe (his mother's uncle) at the Sturgis sawmill at night. Decrease in neighbors helping one another. Self identified as Texas. Tamales—a lady from Pineland, Miss Coleman, and Mr. McDaniel knows her first name—she would make hot tamales and drive to Hemphill and sell them. A Black lady in San Augustine made hot tamales, wife's cousin—gave Mrs. Holmes' the recipe. They made hot tamales until about 5 years ago when Mrs. Holmes started teaching. They are going to make some more soon. Ghost stories—the Pratt House in Hemphill, burned down about a month ago, was said to be haunted. Spent a lot of time at Black Ankle—grandfather, had geese, cows, hogs, chickens—they would feed them and milk the cows. Worked on the farm and stayed with them. Broom swept the yard. Other families in the community—had three aunts—Duprees, who married three Jenkins who would cut and haul pulpwood. Walk to the spring and get water—the spring is still there, near the church. The flood messed up the spring a couple years ago. Mr. Holmes' grandfather and some of his aunts and uncles are buried at the Black Ankle cemetery right up the road from the church. One of the Dupree sisters is still living. Weldon McDaniel did a genealogy for the Dupree sisters and a dedication of markers was done in the Black Ankle Cemetery. Mr. Holmes walked to the Black school, was very close. 80% of the Thomas Johnson School is still there—it is now owned by a lawyer. Rt. 5, Box 815, Hemphill, TX 75948. The building was finished in 1954. Learned how to barbeque from his mother. Uses a mix of dry and green hickory. Marinates with Tony's and Worcestershire sauce over night. Cooks with the fat side up. Has cooked 4-500 pounds of meat at once.

Mr. Holmes father was a chauffeur and a mechanic, worked where Mr. Waller works. He drove a school bus and a dump truck.

When visiting the Black Ankle community, Mr. Holmes would go to the spring and get water, and

then walk out to hwy. 21 where Arvin Neal had a grocery store—it's still standing, about a mile east of the road to Black Ankle, south side of the road. The mail boxes for Black Ankle community were on hwy. 21—a whole line of mail boxes—they would pick up the mail on the way back from the grocery store.

Playing at Black Ankle, his uncle would cut wagon wheels out of pin oak trees, get two 2x4s for axles, and two more boards to sit on, and a scrap fan belt for the tongue of the wagon. 4-6 years old when played with the wagon. Also they rode the goat.

Walked half mile to the city dump—got bicycle parts and made a bicycle, back in 1960-62.

#### 49. Bobby Pantalion, 8-18-10

Son of Matt and Minnie Y'Barbo Pantalion. Youngest of five kids, four boys and one girl. Coming in toward Mr. Pantalion is a segment of an old road—some called it the smuggler's route—it was really the old Spanish Trail, came across the Mountain through the Black Jack Community. They stayed on the ridges for the trail. There was a homestead where Mr. Pantalion, and there was an old old house owned by Mr. Smith that the kids from the college would paint and draw. But two storms knocked it down—now it's just a pile of tin and wood. The road went through to the Mora settlement. Abernethy said that the Pantalion name came in 1792. Mother is 8<sup>th</sup> generation from Antonio Gil Y'Barbo. He had six sons. The road went through Mountain, Black Jack, and then came out at Denning and then you would go on to San Augustine. (Carrice Creek) When 7 years and riding with father in a wagon to Nacogdoches mentioned that a house east of Carrizo Creek had its back to the road—father said that the old road used to go in front of the house, but now it goes in back of the house. In 1943 the gin burned, so had to carry cotton to Nacogdoches. Mr. Bomb Cisco had the gin and you had to go down the Orton Hill and the mules couldn't hold the wagon back. They had a truck, but it wouldn't haul 1,300 pounds of picked cotton. Turn on Butt Street. Needed ration stamps to buy tires and gas for your vehicles. At school had a victory garden, tin can drives. Mr. Pantalion started to school in 1940 at a one teacher school in at Blake, half way to Nacogdoches. Dr. Blake built a house where the old school was. 17 kids at the Blake school—has a photograph. Has father's picture in 1911, Uncle Frank and Uncle Zeno. Miss Parson was the second grade teacher in 1941, Mr. Pantalion and her got off track. Miss Greenwood was his new teacher and he made it fine. Miss Muckleroy taught the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Every Thursday she would read to the class. Got out of the army in 1958 and went back in during the Cuban Missile Crisis. Married in 1963. Spent a winter in Leesville. Talked about time in the military service. Chosen for the honor guard. Showed us family photographs. Discussed locations of the Camino real in the area. Talked about military experiences. Talked about family history—there were quite a few Pantalions in the Battle of San Jacinto. Mentioned stories of buried gold in the area—7 to 9 mule loads of gold, never been found—supposedly buried in the area referred to as The Mountain. Talked about appearance of a lady in the area where the gold was buried—also a ball of light that would follow people in the same area. In the Mountain, there was a segment of road that was so narrow, only one wagon could pass at a time. Tells of seeing two large dogs playing in a field, when they go back the next day, no tracks are seen. Mentioned things he learned from his father—a woman who his father referred to as Grandma Mora said you could hear the sound of the cannons from the Battle of Mansfield (Louisiana) during the Civil War in the Mountain area. Also mentioned a family in the Mountain area that was so poor that to get salt to put in their bread, they had to go to the smoke house and boil the dirt from there to get the salt. Dr. Taylor Mast asked for a crock of pickled beef to deliver Bobby Pantalion. When the time came, bobby's father went to go get Dr. Mast, who rode on an old horse—very slow. Dr. Mast delivered Bobby but never stopped by to pick up the pickled beef. A bale of cotton would bring about \$175, maybe get one bale out of one acre. Talked about the directed killing of cattle, dipping vats to kill ticks on the cattle. Related a story about Bonnie and Clyde when they passed through the area. Talked about when his father worked for Carter Lumber Company in the area—they met two of the Brookshire brothers, who later, along with some of their other brothers, started Brookshire Brothers grocery store. Mentioned that the name “Cordova” used to be pronounced “Cord-a-way” but now it's pronounced “Cor-dough-va.” Bobby's father Matt worked on a road construction crew in Fort Worth, possible sometime in the early '20s, then came home and got married. Bobby talked about

his memories of Leo Bishop—the Texas Ranger who cleaned up the area in the ‘30s. Talked about people in the area making whiskey. Bobby’s father and his parents spoke Castilian Spanish, but they didn’t teach it to the kids—they wanted the kids to learn only English. Bobby’s mother did not speak Spanish. Bobby’s father built the barn around the old wagon that they used to haul cotton up into the ‘40s—the wagon is still there. They would use the wagon to haul things when gas was rationed in the ‘40s. Talks about relations with African Americans in the area. Talked about an Indian Mound near a place called Cordova Prairie. Also a race track in this area. Talked about tobacco being raised at the Polly Farm, in this same area. They didn’t have electricity until Bobby was 8 years old. Talked about the family vegetable gardens. An interesting thing about American Indians in the area: ”Daddy said that Grandma Mora told him that when she was a young girl, and that would have been maybe before the Civil War, whatever, said if the Indians would come up with a little uprising, and said we’d all go over to San Augustine County and stay over there a couple weeks and come back and they were fine. Said they didn’t have no trouble with them, but anyhow, the ones that were here, they’d all kinda go crazy like, and instead of killing them, they just go off and stay gone a while and come back—the Indians was fine, you know.” Bobby Pantalion is described as “Mexican” on his birth certificate. Talked about his mother making hot tamales and having a metate. Also how his mother made hominy.



**50. L.B. Simmons**

Niece of Earl Weathered. Mr. Weathered is 84, he was born on April 23, 1926. He grandfather raised cotton, also had a lot of chickens. Ms. Simmons has 8 siblings—her father passed away in 1965, her grandfather passed away in 1972. Her Uncle Earl was a hard working man. He still plows with a mule—he used to have two mules, but one died. Ms. Simmons father worked at Sturgeons saw mill in Hemphill. They had a vegetable garden growing up. Her mother canned until deep freezers came out. Her family had home remedies until the late '70s or '80s. Castor Oil, Black Draught, Vicks Salve, Robitussin, Bayer Aspirin, Pine Top Tea, Cow Chip Tea. Also used mullein. Went to County Line Baptist Church. “We had good relationships with neighbors. We had a good community. If we showed out at the neighbors or Aunts and Uncles they whipped us and we got another whipping when we got home ‘cause they are going to tell Mamma. I have three children and eight grand babies.” Self identifies as Texan. Miss Mary made tamales—she lived in San Augustine. 3 dollars for a dozen. Her uncle Earl, “He worked in San Augustine at a mill on 147 where they sell them cans and stuff now, there was a mill there. I think he worked in Jasper at a mill. He didn’t work too long, maybe like the winter months. Come time to go back to work in the field and he’d go back to the field.” When asked if her uncle ever had a car, “He got one after we got grown but he couldn’t drive it. He wants that mule and that plow. He use to have a garden beside the road and so many people would stop by and take his picture till he stopped and started a garden behind his house.”

## 51. Agnes Sparks

Regarding genealogy: “On my dad’s side of the family, they came into Texas in the 18 maybe 20s or 30s. And that was Willys Murphy. And he had a land grant down at where MacMahon’s Chapel is. And his daughter was Narcissa Murphy. And she married, Murphy first, for some reason, and that’s my grandmother, was a Murphy. And then, she married an Eddings, and that’s where all that Eddings land comes in down there—she married Sterling Eddings. And I guess that he bought out some of the heirs, I assume that. Because a lot of it ended up to be Murphy—I mean Eddings land, and it was Willis Murphy’s land grant, originally, he had something over 2,000 in there. And her daughter, that was my grandmother, was Susan Virginia, and she married William E. Williams, and he’s buried down at MacMahon’s Chapel. And she’s buried at Chapel Hill. She told her children that she wanted to be buried at her church. I do not know and I have not been able to find out when that church ever started. But she died in 1920, or ’22—long about that time. All of her children are buried there with her, at Chapel Hill, except one, and that one is buried down at what they call the Eddings Cemetery, which if you go around the road down at MacMahon’s Chapel and keep going on you’ll come to the house which I imagine was the Murphy House, and there’s a cemetery back there.” ”And my husband’s granddad lived on highway 1 on down a little ways from what we call Goat Hill—Mt. Horab now, they call it. And his name was Lee Ford. Robert Lee Ford. And we were kin, you know—my husband and I were related and we didn’t really know that, but, at the time. His goes back to his grandmother somewhere was a sister to my grandmother that was a Murphy.” Went to church at Chapel Hill, had two brothers, described a Pop Gun—a homemade toy that shot China Berries. Went to school in Rosevine through the 6<sup>th</sup> grade, then went to San Augustine. Mother was a teacher, dad was a farmer, had a garden, mother canned, only used store-bought remedies—Grove’s Chill Tonic. Mother kept track of grocery purchases by hired help—this was taken out of their pay. Mother and Agnes active in the Epworth League at the Methodist Church. Got a dime on Saturday to go to the show (a nickel) and buy pop corn for another nickel, or wait and get ice cream for a nickel. Always had a car. No stories of American Indians. Her mother rented a room from the Y’Barbos when she was teaching. Mrs. Sparks is an educator—retired in 2008 after about 50 years. Self identifies as Texan. Never heard of a hot tamale when she was growing up. No ghost stories. Drove when she was 14 years old. Active with Chapel Hill Cemetery.

**Appendix 2.**  
**Transcription Example**

## 29. Willie Thorpe Murray

W [Willie Thorpe Murray] It's little things I can't see, but big things I see fine, or if there's a contrast. Okay.

C [Connie Hodges] I have to put my glasses on to read these questions, I just can't walk with 'em on.

W Well, I have readers that I can read the paper, but they're about 12 x magnification, so when you look up, you sure can't take a step. Robert said he met you up at the Half Way Inn one night about the cemeteries. We learned something that night we never knew before that actually once a body is interred it becomes property of the state—I did not know that. I knew there was a lengthy process about trying to get a body moved once it was buried. And I never really thought about why that was so important. I was talking to a friend this morning and her husband just died recently, and she was telling me about a friend of theirs from San Augustine—she didn't give me a name—just walked up and buried in the back yard and that just seems foreign in this day, you know. Well you never know what a piece of property is going to do in the future and they may decide to dig a gold mine right there. So forth. So y'all want to—from the mission. Do y'all have any information at all about that—Robert was not even aware that there was the mission over there. And I told him, I said we need to go visit—do Y'all stay open every day?

G [George Avery] Except Sunday.

W Except Sunday. Well, I need to take him over there. He was born in Etoile, and he and I went to school in 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> grade together. And then he moved away and I didn't hear from him in 55 years. And we got married two years ago. And so, I had married a boy from Oklahoma, and we would have been married 57 years this year, but he died nine years ago. So, when was sick, and I said, "Well, do you want to go back to Oklahoma to be buried with your family?" And he said, "No, I've been south of the Red River more years than I lived in Oklahoma, so—he's interred up here." Robert lived in Pasadena for 55 years, I didn't know he was that close by. But he had married, raised a family, and so, anyway, after he found out my husband had died he came calling, and we got together. We've had two good years, and I said, "You know, God takes away, and he gives you things back. He knew I needed someone to drive for me. And I have a niece—I didn't have children—I have a niece, and she was in Iraq for 22 months, so I was here by myself. Anyway, she came home on R and R for our wedding, so, that's sorta how we got together.

C What we're basically doing is just asking questions about growing up you know, and things like that. We start out with, if you remember the names of you parents and great grandparents, and you said you grew up just down the road, and can you start with that?

W Yes! My great great grandparents came here in 1848 and they bought one thousand acres of land. My great great grandfather was named Washington G. Atkinson. And he bought 1000 acres of land from the Alamaderas Creek to the Polysot Creek down here. And he paid \$1,200 for it—I wondered where he got \$1,200 in 1848! But they came here, and uh, they lived here, and I see—there's five generations of my family buried in the cemetery, so I'm the sixth, and I have a niece that's seven, and she has a son that's eight, and he has three daughters—children that are the

ninth generation.

C And which cemetery?

W I went to school in Chireno, and grew up here on this farm, and my mother thought we were kinda heathens because we rode horses and didn't do any—so she sent us to San Marcos Academy for a year of schooling, and they graded us on table manners, and all kinds of stuff—tried to make ladies out of us—they didn't do too good a job! I remember when I arrived at San Marcos we lived in the dorm, and the dorm mother unpacked my trunk, and she said, "Well blue jeans and cowboy boots are not appropriate!" And so they did the best they could to make little ladies out of us. And I only had the one sister and she was ill, and she's been dead 32 years, so, kinda just leaves me here. My daddy died 50 something years ago, and mother died 25 years ago—she got killed in a car accident up at Henderson.

C What was your mother's side of the family?

W My mother's side of the family was the Sanders, they were raised up in the Denning Community in San Augustine. My great grandfather was named Oscar, and his wife was Otter and her name was Trammel. And I said the reason I remember her maiden name so well, my grandparents were Sammy and Leena Sanders, and every time Grandma Leena would get mad at Sammy, she said, "That's that old Trammel blood coming out of you!" And they were from Arkansas originally. The Atkinsons came from Georgia to here. So anyway, we traced them back to North Carolina and then from North Carolina back to Ireland. And my niece and I made a trip back to Ireland several years ago, and I had heard that even my grandparents speak about the River Shannon, how pretty it was—well, I guess I thought I'd get to the River Shannon I immediately know where they were, but the Shannon River runs nearly the whole length of Ireland, so I don't know what particular area they came from in Ireland, but when I got to Dublin, and looked in the phone directory, there was page after page of Atkinsons, so they're still there and they said that the president of Ireland in the last 20 years had been a Atkinson, so made me feel real connected to Ireland, you know. Every one of them has—they had a big plantation in Georgia, and they came here and they bought land and so we still are kinda land bound—I think the Germans have a form for saying that you're bound to the land.

C And, what did they do for a living?

W Well, my daddy was a farmer for all of his life, and then in the 1950s, agriculture kinda went down—all the people left—the men did, to go to WWII, and when they came back, the mode of living was here, and they had in the meantime found that you could sell our cotton acreage to West Texas, which they could raise the long staple cotton, but they couldn't raise here, so we sold our cotton allotment to West Texas and we took the old fields and turned them into pasture and cattle ranching became the primary thing here. But up until that time, we had a lot of tenant farmers, and cotton and corn were the cash crops, and you raised a few livestock on the side. Hogs to feed the family—bring a little money in, and then you sold cattle, and they were so cheap back then, and we had two or three government programs that my mother said that one of the saddest things that she ever saw—the government paid you for your cattle and then killed them to reduce the size of the herds. And she said, when they shot those cattle that she had raised was the saddest

part of her whole existence.

C They were her babies.

W Yeah, that's right. And then, in the fifties, broiler became a big mode of living here in East Texas. And people could buy say less than ten acres and build broiler houses and could make a living, where you had to have 100 acres to make a cash crop before then. So, our economy changed.

C What was it like for you growing up in the area?

W It was wonderful! We didn't know that we were poor, I mean, you know, we didn't have money. When I was growing up, and I can honestly say this as a true fact, that I was about 16 years old before I ever knew that you used money for anything but to pay the property taxes—and Daddy had borrowed money from the Federal Land Bank—and we had that federal land bank note to pay in the fall. We raised everything that we ate. I remember one time that I was in town with my daddy and I asked to buy a bag of potato chips, and these are his exact words, "Hell, we got a hundred pounds of potatoes at home, go home and slice you some and cook 'em if you want 'em!" So I never did get my potato chips! So, we had horses to ride, dogs to play with, and we went barefooted and worked in the fields. We all had chores as children. I guess today they'd say that you were child labor, but back then, it took a whole family— I remember that I was 6 years old and he set me and my sister and mother and me and he around the table and they said—well, they were going to buy some additional land, and they said they were going to buy to have to borrow the money, and to pay it back, it would be a whole family situation. And they said, "We won't do this if you girls don't want to feel like it's going to be a big burden." Well, I felt all growny—I said, "Go for it!" You know, and I was plowing a mule and plow and daddy let me plow a whole field of corn when I was eight years old, so I guess I've been grown since eight. And it was fun—we had a lot of off times, we would play rodeo, and rope his calves, and he had a hundred head of goats one time and we drove them up in the barn—tried riding them out the window! We had a lot of fun growing up, but you had to work too. We had to bale hay in the summer time, we fed cows in the winter time. We burned wood in our fire places for heat—that's all we had. And in the summer time when the mosquitoes would eat you up, we were in the woods getting that wood because you had to cut some that would be dry when winter time got there. And I hate that! I hated getting in wood when it was hot and the mosquitoes were bad. But when winter time come, the only place we ever expected to be warm in our house was standing in front of the fireplace. You'd get one side warm and turn around and they you'd have to just keep turning!

C I can remember—and you get just a little bit away from it, and you're cold!

W That's right! Now, then they have blowers on the chimneys and they can regulate how much you get, but we got about 10% heat, and 80% of it lost up the chimney.

C Tell me about plowing with a mule.

W Well, you know they had all different sizes of mules—Missouri was the favorite state to go buy mules, and then there was the little Mexican mule, that was a smaller size mule. And daddy

got me one of those and it was a cute little mule, it had four white feet, which was very unusual for a mule to have white feet. And daddy had fixed the plow up for me, and you had to plow up and down each middle, and when you got the end of the row, at 8 years old, that big plow—Georgia stock—was nearly as tall as I was. So, it was kind of a struggle to turn it at the end of the rows. And you would plow it, and you had to be careful that you didn't get too far to the right or left, or you'd cut the corn down. And then, as the corn got a little higher, the mule wanted to chew it as it went by, so I had to put a muzzle on the mule, they had a muzzle that fit to keep the mule from plowing through it. And it was—I just felt so growny I guess I enjoyed doing what I was doing because I thought, “Boy, daddy trusted me with the corn not to plow it out of the field, you know.

C How big was the field?

W It was about 25 acres. And it took a lot of days, up and down the rows, to get it done. And we always had a big watermelon patch and when I was—oh, I think about 13 or 14, I wanted, you know that a lot of the kids went to work in town, like at the food places. And I wanted to get a job, and daddy said, “We only have one car, and you cannot take it away.” So he said, “I you want to make a little money, I'll let you have an extra little track of land and you can put you in a watermelon patch.” So, I planted me this—I don't know, I'm sure it was 3 or 4 acre water melon patch. And we raised those old Charleston Grays, that weighed about 80 pounds, and so there was Sutton saw mill that was located here in Chireno for about 35 years, and they had a lot of people that worked at the mill out there. And this road was a dirt road, and there was a little road that cut through over to New Town Road, so we didn't have a truck, and so daddy made me a slide. And I don't know, it was like a box, with little runners underneath it, and I could hook my little mule up to it, and I would pull watermelons and I would go out to Sutton's Mill and I would sell those big watermelons for 50 cents a piece. And daddy had given me a little coin purse—you'll might have seen 'em, they're like little black—and had a double little click on top. And I had so many half dollars in there, I broke the top! So I thought I was rich! And there was one Black man that lived on the corner, and if I had a watermelon left over, I'd come by and Mr. Henderson would buy it and I'd sell it to him for a quarter, so I wouldn't have to bring it back! So that was my first spending money that I ever made on my own.

C What about turning those watermelon vines?

W Yeah. Yeah, I tell you what and plowing watermelons got to be a trick. You had to kind of go along and turn the vines back real gently, and then turn 'em back on the row to keep from disturbing the blooms and everything.

C When I was little bitty my daddy farmed watermelons, hundreds of acres—he leased the land, but as a kid, that's what we got to do was turn watermelon vines!

W Why, yes! And you know, it was another little summer time job for the boys—you'd sell some of them, they'd help load out a truck or something, that gave them something to do. And I remembered that, my husband and I, when we started going together, he was in Oklahoma hauling hay—the square bales of hay—they paid ten cents a bale for it. And I think he said he hauled hay all summer and they first date he had with me he said if I'd a asked for one more thing, he's a have to borrow a nickel from somebody—I spent his whole earnings! I told him, I said, “Well I saw all

that big combines and equipment and just thought you were rich!” In 1952 when we got married and he came down this part of the country he said, “we were still plowing with mules, but had a brand new tractor sitting out in the shed. So he said, we just couldn’t get modernized, you know!

C And you said your parents and grandparents were farmers and ranchers.

W Yes. And my grandfather, Sammy Sanders, he worked a lot in the log woods—he did a lot of logging. When they had to saw the logs down with those big ole crosscut saws and then they would trim them up and they would have to hook up the mules to skid ‘em out and then when they loaded them on the truck they had to put loading poles coming down and they’d have to hook the harness up and then go on the opposite side of the truck to pull ‘em up there. So that was a long process, and there was a gentleman that lived here by the name of Dicky Davis and he worked for many years in the log woods. And he said those big ole horses that they used for logging, they worked so hard they could honestly just kill themselves trying to perform for you.

C Plus it was dangerous—logging—still is.

W Oh yeah. More dangerous then. And Mr. Dicky one time, he said, that, his first job was at Bannister, which is in San Augustine County. They had a mill. He said he went to work for a dollar a day and he thought he was rich. You just can’t imagine—there was no money—people just existed on what they raised and traded, you know. My daddy always he was always selling cows and horses and stuff, and he told me that you always needed something to trade and one time we was walking in the woods and he picked up a nice stick and he said, “You know, I’ll just throw this in the back of the truck and if somebody comes along I can tell ‘em it’s a walking stick, maybe I could sell it to ‘em!” He had a sense of humor.

C What about gardens and stuff?

W Yeah, my mother always had a big garden. And she raised nearly everything that we ate. And, I remember that days she worked in the garden, it was nearly all day of, you know, the hoeing and everything. And she kept the garden fence around it. She’d buy gladiolas, she loved them, and she plant ‘em where they’d grow by the fence, so that they’d have the fence for protection, or for support to grow on. And, she grew some of the prettiest beets, I just thought that those big ole red beets that she grew was so nice. And everyday, nearly, in the gardening season, we would gather something for our lunch. And you know, you started early, you gathered it early, and then you cooked and then you had lunch. We had a big ole peach orchard, and we had a bunch of pear trees, and so, we had a lot of fruit and we had, of course we as kids, we had all these wild plum orchards and so we went and gathered plums and mother made jelly out of them. The peaches, we had peach preserves, and pickled peaches, and just canned peaches. And the pears, she made some of the best pear preserves that we ate in the winter time. So, I told ‘em that she either pickled or canned or cooked or did something with anything that we could catch a hold of. And one of our favorite foods in the winter time was a hickory nut cake. Mother made a hickory nut cake with a caramel icing. And she’d send us down to the hickory tree to pick out the nuts. And she’s day, “I need a cup of nuts.” And about every half hour she called and see if we had ‘em done, but we’d been picking and out eating and we’d just give her some every once and a while! It took nearly all day for her to get the nut meat.



C Do you still have that recipe?

W Yes I do.

C I would love to have it.

W Okay, I'll look it up in my recipe book.

C Okay, that'd be great. I've never had one, but I've heard you can't beat the flavor."

W Well, we had a huge big ole tree over here, and it was here my whole life time, and during Hurricane Rita, it blew the tree down—up by the roots. And, I said that was a memory I hated to see gone, cause over the years—you go over there when you have a good nut year, and the hulls would be this deep around the base of the tree where the squirrels had eaten it, you know. And we had a lot of Black Walnut trees, now trying to pick out Black Walnuts, it takes a genius. I would take the hammer and put it on something, and I'd try to break and it would just bounce. And then if you gave it a real hard deal, it just shattered it all to pieces! So, I never did learn to pick out Black Walnuts. And I see the squirrels where they eat 'em, they just eat a little hole in 'em and they can extract that nut meat and just—I don't know how they do it, they're so hard, those hulls are. Goes to show you what strong teeth a squirrel has—if he bites you wouldn't have a finger!

C I can remember my grandmother having a Black Walnut tree.

W Did she. Yeah. Now, they are very strong in flavor, and if you use them to cook with, you need but about half the amount. I always—mother used to make divinity candy, and she'd put Black Walnuts in it. Uh, living here, we're a mile and a half from Chireno, but the electric line ended about a mile up the road, and during the war years, we couldn't get the line extended, so we did not get electricity until 1946. So my mother would beat that divinity by hand—where she had that much strength—I can barely make it with the electric mixer going fast, you know! But, anyway, we had to do a lot of manual labor—she did, like washing clothes outside in a wash pot, and stuff like that. So when we got electricity, we really felt like we'd moved into town. We had a pump on the well at the corral for the horses, but we had a bucket and rope at the house. Daddy said the horses were more important—and the mules—because they made the living, and we could draw water all day!

C Well, and probably they used more water than you did.

W Oh yeah, they did. And in the summer time, when we were working in the fields, well, we would take a big old wash tub and draw it full of water in the morning and sit it out in the sun light, and daddy built our big old house down here 75 years ago, but he had the—he put the bathroom fixtures in it at the time—so we had a bath tub, so we could take our water in there and put it in the bath tub and bathe, and drain, we just couldn't heat that much water at one time. So we had no way to heat it. We didn't have gas—we got butane way 'bout the time we got electricity. So we didn't have all these modern, flipping a switch, and turning on a faucet.

C It, sometimes you appreciate that stuff, and sometimes I think it was better way back yonder.

W Well, ah, when the electricity goes down sometimes, and you don't have lights, you have this, I said you don't appreciate it the water until the well goes dry, but, it doesn't bother me as much cause I still have some kerosene lamps, and I have candles, and I always keep flashlight batteries, so it doesn't bother me like it does those people that never had to do without it. It's a complete change for them.

C And, we always got up at day light and went to bed when it got dark.

W Yeah, we didn't need day light savings time! I told them that mother and daddy, actually, they worked from way before sunlight and they worked after sunlight, because we had lanterns that you went to the barn at night to do chores with and one of the things that you were never allowed to do was carry the lantern inside the barn, because of dry hay and stuff like that. And, so, and you had to—on Saturdays, one of my chores at home was to be sure that all the lamps were filled with oil or coal oil, and then clean the globes because they got real smutty all the time. And see that the lanterns that were hanging on the back porch—had to take 'em to the outhouse too, we didn't have indoor toilets, so going to the outhouse was another thing. And in the winter time, it had to be urgent to go to the outhouse. And my grandmother Sanders—you know ladies back then, they were very modest about everything. They didn't want you to know what you were going to do, and granddaddy stacked the big long wood pile between the house and the outhouse, and grandma would—if she saw somebody come up, she'd get her a few sticks of wood and come back to the house, so they wouldn't know she was going to the outhouse! Mr. and Mrs. Willie Metoyer raised a big family on the road here, and she said, oh she would have been way over 100 years now, but anyway, when she and Mr. Willie got married, they got married at the Methodist in Chireno, and they were going to their farm and they were in one of these little open buggies. And they got to the Polysot Creek, and it was in the spring time, and it was overflowed. And the water was running in across the bottom of the buckboard, you know. And she had a long dress on, and she said she wouldn't raise her dress to keep it from getting wet because he would see her ankles.

C My grandmother was Pentacostal—and you do not—you had to have your shoes on—

W And, I think about how modest they were, and today our young people wear a bikini that will fit in the bottom of a thimble!

C Right, and you say, "That's not clothes they have on! They're in their underwear!"

W Well, it's not even underwear. I'm telling you.

C Your gardens, how big they?

W Oh, mother's garden was probably about maybe a half acre. Because we used the—she didn't waste any of her rows growing sweet corn, she would go to the field, we could get field corn, and then daddy always had a big long row of pop corn that we planted in the field. So she had several different types of peas, and beans, and okra, and tomatoes, and, ah, squashes, beets, and

she had enough that we ate all summer, and then she put all the surplus up—she canned everything that was left over. We had fresh vegetables all through the winter that had been canned.

C You can't find food like that anymore, can you?

W No. And she had a big, you know she would have both turnip greens and mustard planted, and I never did like some of the peas, I don't like Black Eyed peas, but I love Purple Hull peas, but she had an old pea that was called a Whipperwill, it was a little spotted crowder, but I really liked was when mother went to the garden and she gathered a few of several different kinds of peas, and then a few Butter Beans, and mixed 'em all together and cooked 'em, that was my absolute favorite. And like Butter Beans, and I liked those big ole purple spotted ones—you know the white—Butter Beans are not butter Beans to me! And the only thing about raising Butter Beans is that they grow at the bottom of the plant and you have to nearly crawl on your stomach to pick 'em!

C It's very hard to pick bush Butter Beans.

W Yeah.

C I had to do a lot of that too!

W And you could—we never wasted anything, like, the Purple Hull peas or the pea hulls could be fed to the cows, and it didn't bother 'em, now if fed it to horses, they would get bloat, and so forth, you couldn't feed Butter Bean hulls on account of the little points that were on the end of 'em. And, corn, when we shucked it, well the cows ate the shucks, and daddy had a big ole corn grinder, and a lot of times we'd put the corn cobs through there and it would break it up and it made nice bedding in the stalls and stuff in the barn. So I told 'em we never really wasted anything. I told 'em we used everything from a pig when we killed it except the squeal! Mother would take the intestines from when you killed a hog and they would turn 'em and get all the stuff out of 'em and then they would be washed through. She'd let us kids wash 'em through several waters, and then the last one, she would turn 'em inside out and be sure they were perfectly clean. And when they made sausage, they would stuff 'em in the intestines and they were hung in the top of the rafters in the smoke house to be smoked sausage. And, they pig bladder—us kids would take it and use it for a balloon—it was just a big deal!

C That was a good toy, wasn't it?

W Yeah, it was. And people they—you know, they would wake the hog head and cook it and they would make something like hogshead cheese, now I never ate it, but my daddy loved it, so we always had that, also.

C And, you can remember them killing the pigs, like the scalding?

W Oh yeah. We usually had uh, I would hear daddy say, "Hmm, this is the perfect hog killing day." And they would kill about 10 or 12 or maybe even 20 hogs in one day. Everybody on the farm would come and help. And I remember that granddaddy, he—Sammy would do the scalding.

You know you have to do it to scrape the hair off of the hide. And he didn't want anybody else to do it because if the water was too hot, it would cook into the skin, and if it wasn't hot enough you couldn't scrape the hogs off. And he would put down a tow sack and pour the water through it and I guess it somehow filtered it and made it just right. And mother always did all the curing of our meat in the smoke house. And she wanted the hams to cut out at about 20 pounds a piece—you know, average out. She said they cured better than a huge ham or a little ham did. And she could keep a smoke going for days. She never had flame, you just had a smoke, and I was going to do it one time, and I guess I got it a little bit too hot. I went out there and my meat was cooking! So, she didn't let me do it anymore. And, I don't remember exactly, I think I've got her old recipe of what they rubbed the meat in. They had a big vat of salt that they mixed it in first, and it'd stay in there so many days and you take it out and rinse it off, and then you'd hang 'em up and smoke 'em for so long. That's the way you'd smoke the sausage, you smoke the sides that made the bacon, and then the hams. And we would eat meat out of the smoke house nearly all summer. I seen the hams have mold, green mold on 'em. Daddy and them would just cut it off and we'd eat it, I guess it really didn't hurt it, it wasn't spoiled. Anyway, we raised a lot of hogs. Daddy sold a lot of pigs to other people, and then we had for our use, and people on the farm's use. My daddy thinks he had to have a piece of bacon or a piece of ham every morning for breakfast or the world would come to an end.

C And, did your momma cook, like biscuits--?

W Oh, hot biscuits every morning. And she made 'em out of fresh butter milk that she had made. And, that was one of the things that she did for her little spending money. She milked a couple of cows every morning and she sold cream and she sold butter and she sold butter milk. And we used to have—they used to call 'em peddlers, he came through—he had a big ole, oh, kinda van type thing that had no windows, it was just a—I don't know what the proper name would be. Like a truck, it had two big doors that opened at the back, and he would come around and he would have baking powders and soda, and needles and thread, and maybe a piece of material, or maybe a little pot, or something that the housewife out in the country wouldn't have. And mother would trade him fresh eggs and butter for anything that she might need, and eggs, and he would take 'em back to town and the ladies in town would have fresh farm products, you know. And my sister and I would gather eggs, and that's where I learned to tell the first lie that I ever got a whipping for. Mother had sent me out to get eggs out of a next, and they were always taller than I could reach. And I reached up there to get eggs and there was an old Chicken Snake in there. And it scared me so, and mother would send me after eggs, and I'd come back and say, "There wasn't eggs today, those hens didn't lay." And so she put up with this several days, and she said, "I don't believe my hens have quit laying." And so she went out there, and there was all the accumulated eggs in the nest. So she said, "Have you been getting these eggs." And I said, "No, momma, I was scared of the snake." So she gave me a whipping and she said, "Next I send you after eggs, you get the eggs." They used to have an old Chicken Snake when he swallows stuff, he has to wrap around something to crush what he's eaten, and they used to sell glass eggs. And you would feed it to the Chicken Snake—and it just tickled you to death when you knew he's got one. And I said, "Boy that old snake is going to die!" And, door knobs—used to be made out of those white porcelain door knobs, and for some reason, we seemed to always have some, mother used those for her—you know you always to leave an egg in the nest for the chickens to come back and lay. And, so she would use those door knobs, and they didn't seem to know the difference, they'd just

lay it. And, we had guineas, and my daddy got a big kick out of them, but I always thought they were saying, “Poll Shack, poll shack, poll shack!” And if you got Guinea eggs, you could not get your hand anywhere close in the nest, you had to take a stick and raise, and pull the eggs way out to gather them from the nest, if you didn’t the guinea wouldn’t go back on the nest.”

C Now I didn’t know that, but I love guineas, I used to love to hear them.”

W Yeah. I did too.

C They were noisy!

W Yeah, and they were really good around keeping snakes away, because they would see a snake and put up such a fuss that you knew something was there. We’re running out of snakes in East Texas. The wild hogs are eating all the snakes and we don’t have—our ecosystem is going to be out of balance before you know it. I walk in the pasture all the time, and I cannot remember the last time I have seen a snake.

C Somebody had told me the hogs were eating the snakes.

W The hogs are ruining the whole—

C And the hay field, they can ruin it over night. And then get on that tractor and try to ride over it, hard!

W It’s really, I don’t know what they’re going to do, they going to have to find some way to breed them so they make ‘em sterile. I don’t think they’ll be handle it any other way.

C ‘Cause they’ve almost overtaken—there’s not hardly a place you go that the hogs aren’t around.

W That’s right. That’s right.

C With daily life, talk about school—you talked about your chores, but how ‘bout school and play time?

W Yeah, well we had—of course school is right here, a mile and a half up, so I didn’t have too far to go to school, but we had a fairly decent school building here. It was built in, I believe, 1929. It was a brick school building. But, we had a—the water—what we called a well house, and it had several fountains in it, but the water ran into a trough and then instead of having pipe off of the campus, they just had an open ditch to let the extra water run down through. And we got used to playing on the school campus, jumping that little ditch all the time. The boys’ rest room was a big ole outhouse type rest room, and it was way off of the campus. And the girls’ was pretty close by, and so going to the bathroom—and for a long time, we didn’t have—you carried your lunch. But then, we got a hot lunch program, sometime in the 1940s. And so, I remember that I did not like carrots, and I had a home room teacher that was very, very strict. And I remember that when you ate you had to scrape out the left over food in buckets, and stack your dishes. Well, she said that I

thrown all my carrots away, so she went and got me at least a cup of carrots and made me eat ‘em, and I thought I had been crucified. But, today carrots is one of my favorite things! I had a friend that was here visiting not too long ago—he went to the little school at Black Jack, and it was just two or three rooms, and I think they might have just gone to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. And, they consolidated with Chireno—I have no idea this time, what time it was. But the government had a lot of commodities they were handing out, and Butch said that they fed them raisins at school. And that was the first time he had ever eaten raisins in his life, so there are a lot of things that you learn as kids. We had—I told him when I went to school, my favorite thing was lunch and recess! So I should have studied a little harder! There was—I had some really nice teachers, and I had a couple of teachers that were very, very strict on everything. I had one that was—she ended up teaching 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup>, and 6<sup>th</sup>, and you had so much memory work back then, you know, like the multiplication tables, and stuff like that and she—if you were being naughty in class, she’d say, “Willie, come up here and recite the multiplication tables one through five, or something, you know, and if you didn’t get it, well the kids would just snicker and laugh, you know. And then, at Valentine, we’d made homemade Valentines in the classroom, and then the teacher would have a really pretty decorated box on her desk, and you would write out who you wanted to give your Valentines to, and put ‘em in the box, and then the teacher would bring the little refreshments, and then she’d hand out Valentines and boy, you could really tell who was popular—they got all the Valentines, and some of the little kids didn’t get any, so they discontinued that, because of showing favoritism, I guess. We had fund raisers and they’d have box suppers, and I don’t know if you’ve ever been to a box supper or not, but you would, say I would fix up a box, and decorate the box really, really pretty, and I’d maybe put sandwiches and some kind of desert, or something. And they’d have an auctioneer, and they would sell those boxes. And a lot of the young guys would bid on ‘em, and if you bought your box, then you got to go eat supper with that person. So that was a real popular thing, and sometimes the boys didn’t know which box you had done, and they’d bid on the wrong boxes! And those were real popular—they still do something similar to that, and when they’re having your candidates are running for office, they have pie suppers at a lot of these rural churches, and communities. And the politicians will pay a pretty good price for some of the pies that you’re selling, and it raises money for that particular—there’s an old church over in San Augustine county, they closed it up and built a new church, and they kept the old church building for kind of a community center, and they have to raise money to support the building and pay the utilities. So they have pie suppers, I notice, in the paper, and people turn out pretty good for ‘em. Depends what candidate wanting office, how much he’s gonna spend! We had a lot of things like that, they used to have ball games—soft ball, because you had outside courts, and so forth. There was very little basketball when I went to high school, they had a couple of goals out on the—you know it was dirt, we didn’t have—and we had a volleyball team—I played on the volleyball team. And, when I was—couldn’t never jump at the net and spike it down, but I could get the ball to somebody else, so we played a lot of the little schools that were—Goodwin was one that I liked to go—it was over in San Augustine County—the school has since been closed up, but they had real soft sand over there, and when you fall, it was pretty comfortable! Some of the little places you play were—had a lot of gravel on it.

C How long has your family owned the land?

W Since 1848—I don’t know how long that is—have to go get a calculator!

C Okay. Tell us about the old people and places in the area that stood out in your mind

growing up.

W Well, I, you know, I was—my daddy’s family—his mother died when I was 6 years old, and I remember going to her funeral—she died in February, and it was cold and wet, and I thought the cemetery was spooky, and sad. And I remember holding onto daddy’s leg, but his father had died when he was eight years old. So there were no grandparents on my daddy’s side of the family. But on my mother’s side of the family, I had a grandma and grandpa, and great grandma and great grandpa. And, my great grandmother, she was always so sweet about—like I lose my doll’s dress, you know, how you—and she say, “Baby, you can’t run around with your doll with no clothes on it.” And she would go in and—flour used to come in little cloth sacks. And she would sit down and make me a doll dress to dress my doll. And, I still have one down in my cedar chest—she had cut it out—it had little sleeves, a little set in waist, with little rows of tucks on it here. And anyway, my great granddaddy would lean back in a chair on the front porch on the back legs, and he would sleep. And we always wanted to knock the chair legs out from under him see if he’d fall, but we wasn’t brave enough to do it. And, of course, my grandparents, they worked when I was young, and as they got older, they moved in the house with granddaddy and grandma, so it was just wonderful to have two sets of grandparents in the same house. And I was the oldest grandchild that my granddaddy had, so I thought was more special because I was the first grandchild, although he told me every time he picked me up I wet on him! But, ah, when granddaddy died, he was 80 something, I found out all the grand kids—we all thought we were number one, so he was very good at loving us and spoiling us.

C That unconditional love.

W That’s right. And every Sunday morning when I got ready to go to Sunday School, I would stop by his house and he would holler, “Come on in, baby, granddaddy’s having coffee, and I’m listening to the best gospel music on the radio.” And he liked to pour his coffee into a saucer and sip it out of the saucer. And he drank his coffee that way for ever. I never learned to drink coffee—my mother made such strong coffee that you could have made five cups out of one her cups. But, she said her grandfather taught her to drink strong coffee and she liked it like that.

C What do you remember about the old roads in the area?

W Roads? Huh! They were so rough in the summer time and so wet in the winter time. And 95 did not go all through and 103 was nonexistent, it wasn’t built until in the ‘60s when they got ready to—before they built Rayburn Lake. And, we would come home a lot of times in our car would get stuck in the mud, and we’d just get out and walk home barefooted. And daddy would take the mule and stuff and come in the morning and pull it out. Because, nobody below us was going to get anywhere either, so if they came along they just stayed stuck ‘til the morning also! And we had two wooden bridges here on the creek—and there were just boards across—no banisters on the side. And you had different boards going in a different direction where you drove the tires on, and we were forbidden to ever come across ‘em if the water was in flood stage—Daddy said, “You don’t know if the bridge is there or if it’s been washed out.” So if we came home, and in the mean time the creek had risen, we couldn’t get across, we had to go back to a neighbor’s house and stay. So we did leave our automobile there, and the roads were really bad, and they paved this road in the late ‘50s. And that was the greatest to us living in the country. Your car stayed so dirty, and then in the summer time, and most people didn’t even have air conditioning in cars back then, and

during the war years, we couldn't get anti-freeze for our car. And I remember that my night time job was to go out and take the plug out of the bottom and let the water drain out of the radiator at night so it wouldn't freeze and then you had to fill it up before you went anywhere the next day.

C Did y'all always have a car?

W Yes. We always had a car. When my mother and daddy married it was a 1934, and she didn't know how to drive. And daddy—they got married in July, and he was in the middle of his crops and everything and he said, "I don't have time to teach you to drive." So, she said, "One day, daddy was in the fields, she wanted something from town, and so she got the key and our big ole house has a car port on it that's got brick pillows and stuff, and mother said she managed to back the car out but she took both fenders off. And I said, "Well what did daddy say when he got home?" He said, "Well, you got it out, didn't you?" But he did take time after that to teach her to drive. And so, I don't model car—I sure it was a Ford of some type in '34 that they had. And I remember them telling me that they had gone over to Louisiana and when they came back across the Sabine where Pendleton was, they drove on to a ferry and you had—it was just one car on it, and you had to take a rope and pull yourself across to the other side of the river. And I had done a little research one time to see what year the highway department finally put a bridge in over and it was in the late '30s before they put the first bridge across over there. So, a lot of history has changed even in my 74 years of being here on earth.

C What do you remember about highway 21?

W Well, in 1934 there was one of our Senators, or something, he was making a campaign speech in Chireno and he said that we would get highway 21 paved. It was—when mother and daddy married—I was born in '35, and I think they either paved 21 in either '35 or the beginning of '36. So, it was a dusty road between here and town. And I remember my daddy saying that his father died when he was 8, but he remembered going to Nacogdoches with his daddy, and they got up, before daylight, and hitched up the wagon, and it took 'em all day to go to Nacogdoches and they would get there, and load out their supplies, and they came back out—there used to be a roadside park called Eggnog Branch. And they would camp there with a lot of other people in the night and then they would get before daylight and hook up the team and would get back to Chireno in time to maybe unload their stuff before dark set in. So it was an all—two day trip to Nacogdoches and back. And Mr. Gillette Tillford was an old lumberman that lived in Nacogdoches, and several he and my father were on jury duty—federal court—in Tyler, and he was telling me that the first automobile that he had—and he made a trip to Houston—it took 8 days from Nacogdoches to Houston. He said they would go so far and they'd have a flat, and they'd have to stop and fix the flat. And the roads were practically nonexistent, you know, so that—in his lifetime to see the big highway was really something, you know.

C And nobody thinks anything about running to Nacogdoches now.

W Well, no! You run up there—it's twenty minutes from here to Nacogdoches if you drive the speed limit and don't run behind two, three trucks. But, back then, it was just all day. And those old hills, coming up Orton Hill was just terrible—sometimes if you had very much freight on your wagon, you'd have to have a double team to get up it. And that big hill as Sand Hill was another



long hill. And they said in the summer time that sandy soil—they called it sugar sand—would get so deep that your wagon wheels would bog down in it just like mud in the winter time. There was a lady that died a few years ago, Miss Alma Layton that lived here, she said her family moved here from Martinsville. And coming—the road from Martinsville to Chireno, she said they got to some of those bigger hills, and they had two wagons—they unhook one team and make a double team to pull ‘em up. And she said they were sitting outside waiting for the daddy to get the wagon up, and this lady made cookies and brought out to her. She said, she never forgot those cookies when they were coming. And they moved way out in the country, and she boarded in Chireno in the winter time to go to school, because you couldn’t get over the roads, they were so bad.

C What about any stories about American Indians in the area.

W Well, the only story that I know of about Indians here is Mr. Randolph Fall had the first store in Chireno, and I don’t what year he opened the store here, but you know, the Civil War was over in 1865, and the Indians were never really put on the reservations and taken out until 1870 something. And he said that in his store, his son was the first white child that was born in Chireno, and that the Indians came back and by and just wanted to rock his cradle. All this was just oral history that was passed down, and that’s all I really know. I think that the Indians that were right around here were pretty well friendly type Indians—I don’t know of any Indian fights that they told about. In Dr. Crocket’s Two Centuries in Texas, I think he said we had about, what 163 different tribes, I never thought about that many Indians being here.

C Do you know, like of any people finding arrowheads?

W Oh, there’s a lot of arrowheads. There’s been people that—when it rains, they go down—or the creeks dry up or the branches—and they still picking up arrowheads even today. They hunted them so extensively, it’s getting where it’s rarer and rarer to find one, you know. There’s a young man up here, Ricky Holloway, he had quite a collection of arrowheads that he’d picked up over a twenty year period, you know.

C What about Spanish in the area?

W I don’t know—I don’t know anything about that.

C Okay. What about African Americans in the area.

W We had a lot of Black people that lived here, and of course they worked in the cotton fields and everything. And, you know, a long time ago when I was young you were not allowed to call older people by their names—you know, they had to be aunt so-and so or cousin so-and-so. Well my daddy made me address the Black people the same way, and you know, I got used to saying Aunt Sara, or whatever. And, I was taught never to be disrespectful to the Black people, you know, and if he would have ever heard me call one a “Nigger” he would have whipped me ‘til the sun came up. He said that they were just—in our, in here, in Chireno, nearly all of our Black people owned their little track of land, and they kept it. So I thought it gave maybe more clout to the Blacks because they were property owners and they had more pride than some of the poorer Black folks. And I attended the Black Church, there’s the Baptist just right up the road here, and some

of the best friends I have is uh Colored People. I had—I do remember, though, when I was—we had two cotton gins in Chireno—the Nauss and the Buckner Gin. And daddy would send me, and maybe one of the Black men to the gin to take the cotton off. And he gave us money one time to get a hamburger at the café. We had a pretty little ole café that was pretty primitive, but anyway, I went to get my hamburger, and I can't remember what the Black man's name was, I think we called him Captain—was going to go with me, and they told me he couldn't eat at the front—that he had to eat at the back. Well I was just horrified about that, and I got my hamburger and I went back around to where he was, and he was sitting on the back step where they been throwing out the dish water and everything, and I went and I told daddy, "This is not fair." And he said, "Yeah, but it's the law of the land, you know, so anyway I learned pretty young the separation was not right, but there was very little that you could do about it.

C In my lifetime I can remember different windows at the Dairy Queen.

W Yeah. Well, when my husband first came here, I used Dr. Bennet a lot for my doctor for my sinus infections and stuff, and even up in the '50s he still had a Colored waiting room and a White waiting room. And they had two different drinking fountains, Colored and White. And we had a doctor here that delivered me, he was Dr. Taylor Mast, and he has his office at his house, and he would see patients, and there was such a distinct separation—if you were waiting out on the porch to see him if you were White, you sit on one side, and if you were Colored you sit on the other. And we had a big train depot—the train came into Chireno and they had a big—and they had separate waiting rooms at the train depot. So I think you learned at a—and all those peoples that couldn't do that were my little playmates that I'd worked in the fields with and we had shared our meals with, but, we had one, after I married and even moved here—a lady used to come and help me clean windows and things, and we never could get her to eat at our dining table with her, even though she was asked time and time again, she said, "No, it's not right." So, she was raised in a different time frame.

C That's how my grandmother and them were, it wasn't prejudice it was just—how it was.

W —the way it was! That's right. And I was told a lot of times not to eat at the tenant farmer's table, and I didn't know until quite a long time that daddy said it wasn't that there was anything wrong with it, that they had such large families they hardly had enough food to feed themselves and he said, "I didn't want you eating up their food." But most everybody had long benches on each side of the table, and I was playing with those kids, and it come meal time, their mother's would ask me to eat, and so I didn't know why I was forbidden to eat there for a long time. But anyway, food was hard to come by.

C What about, like old pictures and Bibles, documents and things like that—do you have—

W Yeah, I have my grandmother's old family Bible, and she had, you know, the family listed in it, and then in the back of the Bible—it was a big ole Bible, that was tabled, you know. And it had a whole photo album in the back. And a lot of the pictures are tin types, you know, but the bad thing about it is, there are no names on any of them, and you look at a baby picture, you have no idea who it is. And I have told people over and over and over, when you get your pictures back, please put names on it, and dates! You know, because when you're dead and gone, someone gets

in there my trunk of pictures, they're not going to know who anybody is.

C We have some of those in our family.

W Yeah. And so I have tried to make it a point to always put names on the back of 'em. A few years ago, our historical society here in Chireno decided to put together a little history of Chireno. And we wanted it put in story form for each person, so it would cover a range of ages, you know. And we thought about when we started out it would be a history of Chireno and we thought it would be a little pamphlet about like that. Well it grew into a big book, well, we put pictures in it, and so many of 'em were turned in for us to put in the book, but they had no names on 'em, so we couldn't use 'em, because we didn't know who they were. So our book ended up being a—we thought—very nice. We made it—got it printed, had the index, and the index didn't get in the book. So when you get ready to look up a story, you've got to read—

C —you've got ready through and—

W So, anyway, several people have commented and said that they thought that we did a really, really good job of putting the history of Chireno together.

C Now I had read one a long time ago, it wasn't a great big book, it was a smaller book.

W Yeah. I'll go get a copy in a minute and show it to you. I may be telling you more than you want to hear this morning!

C This is great!

W Just tell me to hush when you get through.

C No ma'am, this is great. Okay, describe the ethnic origins on both sides of the family. Were mixed marriages common—was English the only language you spoke?

W Yeah. In our family it has been. Of course, I think all of us that are here are a mixture of—you know—we had Irish and English, and then my mother, they had some Dutch and so forth in theirs, but we had no cultural—everyone has just been English speaking. We've had no Hispanics or anything like that in our family, ever.

C And, no different languages as the school, it was always—

W No. In fact we had a bunch of children here in the very beginning that came from households that did speak Spanish, and their parents would forbid them to speak Spanish because they thought people looked down on 'em. And we had a Colored family here that was—they were from Louisiana and they were French Canadian, and they were kinda olive colored, and when they came to Chireno they wouldn't let 'em go to the White school so they had to go to the Colored school. And they have now intermarried and—it's hard to know that they spoke fluent French. And they ran a little store up here on the road and I rode my horse to town and back all the time. Because I was taking stuff to the blacksmith shop—daddy was needed tools sharpened, or horses

shoed, or something. And I would stop there and visit with Dennis and Victorine and they were very, very sweet people and I'd like for them to talk to me in French because I thought it was a pretty language, you know.

C So there were some people in the area that could speak French?

W Yes. And there was one family of Y'Barbos and he spoke fluent Spanish also. They were not from Mexico, they came here from—the Viceroy of Spain sent the Y'Barbos to Texas and they were really from Spanish nobility. But people kinda looked down on them back then, uh, I had one of them to tell me one time when they were young, they tried—they hired out to pick cotton and they wanted 'em picking in a separate field. So their daddy wouldn't let 'em speak Spanish and he could speak Spanish fluently up until the time he died. Anyway, there's a lot of prejudice that's certainly been put to rest that should have been a long time ago. I said, it was a shame to have had Spanish spoken in your home, and not learn it. You know, and I think that's the same way about the French. I would have given anything—we did good to speak correct English and didn't always do that!

C I still don't! I was born and raised in East Texas and—

W That's right! My husband came here from Oklahoma and I told him that we had a language barrier and I would say that we put our car in the car house, and he said it was the garage—and he would ask for a gunny sack, and I called it a tow sack. And we had red bugs, and he called 'em chiggers. And we had grass spurs and they called them sand spurs, so we had a language barrier just across the Red River.

C I know what a grass spur is, but I never heard it called a sand spur!

W Oh, I know what a grass spur is—I had an experience with a grass spur, when I was going to school out at San Marcos, we were out on the campus, had some kind of little garden party and I had a big full skirt, you know, in the '50s how you wore the full skirts and petticoat. And I sat down, and I got up and there was a grass spur in my skirt. Well, I did like that, it stuck in my finger, and I went to do like that—how ignorant can you be! And I sucked it down my throat and it stuck in my voice box. And they had to take me to the hospital the next morning to have it removed. And I have an article that I made the paper, they said, “This tale will out tell any fish bone tale!” And I remember the—Miss Lightfoot called my daddy, and she said, “Mr. Atkinson I hope you sold a lot of cows, your daughter has cost you a hospital bill!” So, anyway—I managed to always to get in trouble.

C What about relationships with your neighbors?

W Oh, well, we had really good relationships, and my mother was so, ah, she was just one of these people that work, work, work, and she couldn't stand to see people that had less than she had. I'd seen my mother make quilts, and quilt 'em, and take 'em to families that didn't have the covers. She would can stuff, and I hate to say this, she would give it to 'em, and instead of them rinsing out the jars or something, they would just throw 'em up under the house. And mother in the spring time would go around crawling up under houses getting her canning jars and take 'em and boil 'em

in the wash pot. But, we the—lot of people had big families, and children got whooping cough and diphtheria, and I've seen mother leave us and maybe go stay two or three days with the lady that was sick to take care of her family—that was just the normal way of doing things, you know, and we learned—while mother was off taking care of the sick, we had to take care of ourselves, you know. And, there was a lot of folk medicine, you know doctors didn't have a lot to doctor you with either. And they would make medicine in coal oil—to this day, I still have a bottle out here. If you cut yourself, and you put it in the coal oil, it will quit bleeding and it will not get sore. My niece—let's see—Pam is 52, and she cut herself in the kitchen not too long ago, with a knife and she couldn't get it to stop bleeding and I said, "Well, baby, just go out on the deck, and let your finger run blood, and I'll be down there. And I took my little coal oil and went down there and poured some in a cup, and she put her finger in it, and it quit bleeding, and she said, "Aunt Willie, don't you think we need to go get it sewed up?" I said, "We're going to wrap it in this bandage real tight." And I took a piece of material, and she called me the next morning, she said, "You won't believe it! But it's not even sore, and it looks like it's already starting to heal back!" That's an old remedy that I still believe in.

C Can you still buy coal oil?

W I don't know. I have a big green wine bottle that I've had for years, and I've still the coal oil in it.

C It doesn't take much.

W Yeah, it doesn't take much.

C What about other home remedies like that?

W I remember that poison ivy was something that was real common here, and we have a little weed that grows down in the pasture, you can find it in the woods, it's got a real tiny little leave on it. And they called it fever weed, and you take it and boil it in water, and then cool it and you can rub it on poison ivy and it will cure the poison ivy. That was one thing that I remember. We had quinine—that was the first really medicine that I knew, because malaria was so prevalent when I was growing up. And, daddy went to—I guess you could go to the drug store, or whatever, and you could get empty capsules. And you could get quinine in the bulk. And he would pour some of the quinine on the table, and we would take the empty capsules, and you would fill it up until it wouldn't hold any more, put the lid on it, and we took quinine all the time, like that. So, I guess quinine wasn't regulated or anything that you could get it. And another thing that you could get for terrible pain was paregoric, and of course you can't get that anymore. And, of course, they tell you just to talk a teaspoon full—it tastes so bad I don't know why anybody would want more than a teaspoon full! And I remember when I was young and I don't remember what he was mixing up, but Doctor Taylor made house calls, and he would—he had a little dish that he'd pour two or three things out of a jar—and then he'd take, ah, a type of mallet and he'd crush it all together, and he had little white pieces of paper, and he'd pour the dosage in one of those and fold 'em up. And when we were given the medicine, he would dump that solid into some kind of liquid and take medicine, I don't remember what it was for. Because I was quite young at that time.

C Do you remember any other plants that they used?

W Yeah, there was a Colored lady that lived on the farm, and there's a big ole plant that grows—it looks sorta like, uh, cabbage like, and it's got big fuzzy leaves on it and they call it some kind of mullein. And she used to gather that to do something to doctor with, I don't know it—

C Was it for coughs or respiratory?

W Could be. Vicks Salve was my mother's big thing when I was growing up. In the winter time you'd get ready to go to bed—you had to rub your chest with Vicks Salve and then in the morning, it had to be washed off—you couldn't go out in the air with the Vicks Salve all over you!

C Right. To this day I don't like the smell of Vicks Salve, 'cause every winter—

W Oh, and everybody had castor oil—they used to give you castor oil all the time. And so, I guess that those are some of the things, and I do remember that there was something called, three s's, or something—some kind of tonic, or black draught—I don't really know what they were.

C Somebody mentioned black draught. Was that like an ointment or something?

W I think it was an internal medicine, I think it was like a mineral, so to speak. I remember that we had impetigo when we were quite young and it would leave scars on you where those sores had been. And I remember that the doctor told us that a lot of it was lack of iron in our diet, and so mother started us on raisins when we were young and I still keep a jar of raisins. A lot of times during the day if I need a snack I get a little handful of raisins and eat 'em.

C Do you believe that there was more dependency in previous times on the neighbors than there is now?

W Oh yes. There's—you know, I honestly can say that some people don't even know their neighbors, you know, and now a days, being able to have instant houses by moving and by mobile homes, somebody will buy a little tract of land and you say, well somebody lives there in a mobile home, they have no idea who it was. And one of our favorite things to do socially, and it was of necessity, really, we'd get our baths at night, and it was so hot in the house in the extreme hot summer time, you could hardly go to bed, your sheets were so hot. And we would site on the porch and talk, and a lot of the neighbors would come and they would sit and talk, and you learned—as a kid, we could listen to these old tales that they told. And kids would play, and I remember that we'd have our bath, and we'd get out and play, and seemed like we had heavier dewes then, or maybe it was because we were out, we'd play 'til we'd get nearly wet—get ready to go to bed, and mother said, “You have to wash your feet again before you get in bed.” I said, “Momma, just let me sleep on the floor, and I won't have to wash my feet.” And, daddy, of course, had a lot of the tenant farmer, they'd come at night and they talk about what field they were going to work into the next day, and what mules that they were gonna plow and it was like, you were giving your orders to your—to work the next day. Or maybe he'd pull some hands out to build fence, you know, whatever you needed to do.

C But everybody caught up on the information—and everything.

W Yeah. And you always had a witty person that would tell you something that was funny, you know. We had one guy, he was always telling jokes, and I remember one time he was talking about this elderly couple that was out for a walk. And a bird flew over and pooped right in the guy's forehead. And his wife said, "Hmm, wish I had a tissue." He said, "Why, that bird's probably three miles from here!" Just little things like that have stuck with me over the years, some of the little things.

C Just entertainment—

W Tall tales was, you know, if they were a hunter, they had killed the most squirrels, or the biggest deer, or if you went fishing, they kill—ah, caught the most fish, or whatever, you know. Bragging was a big thing, and ah, another thing that I remember—going coon hunting. Course we had big fields of corn, and two or three coons in a corn field could destroy a half an acre in a night. So, Daddy had men that coon dogs, and they would come, and I remember that the hunters wore a little band around here, it had a light—I think it was a carbide light or something. And we'd go on cold nights and hunt coons, and when the dogs treed one, they would bark and bark, and coons would run up a tree, and we'd take an axe and chop the tree down so the dogs could get the coon. It might have been abusive to the animals, but then we had to do something to keep your livelihood under control.

C When we were little, daddy had coon dogs, and course they farmed, and we'd go coon hunting, and that was the most fun hunting of any hunting—

W Oh, yeah, and it would be cold, and sometimes we'd stop and build a little campfire and just sit around, you know, and before you went home, and you'd be half the night coon hunting. And, ah, daddy had this same vision problem that I have, and so he could not see to shoot a gun, but he always kept a gun, and shells, and I had an uncle—Uncle Alton died two or three years ago out in Lubbock, and to the day he died he swore this was a true story, he said, "Daddy handed him two shells and a shotgun and he said, "Now Alton, kill two birds with one shot," and he said he did! And he never changed his story, anyway. Shells were—you didn't waste one either, you know, you made good on 'em. And I begged daddy and begged him one time to let me shoot that ole shotgun. I remember, it had a black stock on it, and he said, "Now hold it up to your shoulder real tight." And it was a 16 gauge shot gun, and when I shot it, it kicked so bad—knocked me down, and I had a bruised shoulder forever—I never wanted to shoot it again!

C What about fishing, did you like to go fishing?

W Oh yeah. We had the creek here, and we'd go down and we would, ah, we didn't, of course, have rods and reels, we get us just a pole 'cause we really lot of times didn't have cane poles, and fix us a line and a sinker and hook. And we'd catch those little perch. And oh Lordy! We'd get three or four of 'em and we'd go home we thought we had a prize. And mother used to cook 'em and she'd just fry 'em whole, and she'd cook 'em real crisp and we'd eat the tales and everything. Thought they were the best things in the world. And then, lot of times, when we laid the crops by in the summer time, daddy would load up a wagon and a lot of the field hands, and mother would

take food and we'd go down to the Cottonham Bridge that was between San Augustine and—

C Right.

W And we'd camp for a night or two and they would catch catfish and clean 'em. And I remember all we ever had to eat was bread, and the fried fish, and fried potatoes, you know. But, I've never enjoyed catfish as good since I've been grown as I did those.

C There was a railroad crossing down there at Cottonham Bridge, wasn't there?

W Don't remember it, baby, don't remember it, no. And then another thing we did for fun in the summer time, we always had fried chicken on Sunday. Mother would kill two chickens at night, and there was just four of us in the family, but daddy liked white meat, I liked white meat, my sister liked meat, so she'd have to kill two chickens to have enough white meat. But after church, we would go to Milam Lake, or we would go to Bannester Lake, or we'd go to Bland Lake at San Augustine, and we'd have a picnic and swim in the afternoon. That was nearly every Sunday occurrence in the summer time when I was growing up. And, mother would cook those chickens, and fix our picnic lunch before we went to church, and sitting the back seat, it just get to smelling so good, I just couldn't wait 'til we got there to eat it, you know! And I would give anything to have one of mother's home grown chickens. She grew 'em on the yard and when she got ready to kill 'em that week, she would put 'em in the pen, and she'd feed nothing but chopped corn. And when she killed one, she'd check the craw to see what was in it. If it wasn't healthy, we didn't eat the chicken, you know.

C And, they're totally different flavor than what you go buy at the store.

W They certainly are. These are popped full of hemrod—hormones, and everything, yeah.

C And they get to where now they grow 'em in the dark, those retro houses, it doesn't seem healthy to me.

W And I remember when we would taken lunches to school, mother would fix a big ole biscuit, and we would, she'd put a slice of her good baked ham in it. And I always wanted to have light bread, and we didn't have light bread, and I'd go to school and I'd trade my sandwich for somebody that had a light bread sandwich, and I think about now, what I wouldn't give for one of mother's biscuits and that home cooked ham.

C My grandmother said, and they lived in Center, but they lived a mile out, so they were in the country, but she said her younger sister always liked light bread, and she would trade her biscuit for the light bread, you know.

W Well, I never remember having a loaf of light bread ever, but I do remember on rare occasions that daddy would come home with a box of crackers. I never saw home crackers, at all. And daddy would buy, uh, sometimes he would go to town and he would come home with a whole stock of bananas, and he would hang 'em on the back porch, and all the kids would come—he'd tell 'em to come and get a banana, and that was a real treat. Because he never came home with



just a sack of bananas, we always bought the stalk. And then when the stalk—the bananas were all gone, he hung the stalk in the chicken house and it something about killing the chicken mites. I don't remember the whole story, but chicken mites were something that was real, real bad. That—there was hardly anything that you could put on chickens to keep 'em from getting them. And, the chickens that we grew on the yard, you had to put 'em in a chicken house at night because the predators would get 'em. And, I can remember, that was another chore of mine, mother—when we would get ready to go to bed, she said, “Did you close the chicken house door?” And I'd say, “Oh, I didn't!” And out the house she'd go to close the chicken house door.

C 'Cause them chickens knew when it was time to roost.

W Yeah. And my mother—she thought her chickens were her babies. She had a—we had a big corn sheller that you put the corn in, and it hold, and it turn it and took all the corn off of the cob. But then she had another little hopper that you put the ground corn in and ground it and make little chops. And she'd take her apron and fill it up with chops, and she go out, “Here, baby, here baby—where's mama's babies?” You know. And—

C And they come running!

W Yeah. And she prized her roosters, if they were really pretty. And I had a China Berry Gun, we made it out of switch cane, and you made a plunger, and you put China Berries in it, and use it to shoot. And she caught me shooting her rooster one day, and she told me, “You shoot another China Berry at my rooster, and you're going to get a whipping.” And I just couldn't stand it, and I took it and shot another one and he jumped up. I said, “See how high he jumps!” And she said, “We're going to see how high you jump as you get this spanking!” I think I got a spanking every day. I just couldn't keep out of trouble.

C Especially if they told you not to do something.

W Yeah. Mr. Tom Blount, you may know him over in San Augustine County. His—was raised around Denning. His grandfather was a doctor there. Anyway, Daddy had a big ole syrup mill—we raised a lot of cane, and we made ribbon cane syrup. And so, they had come over, his daddy did, and brought little Tom, and I guess we were about 6 years old, or something—and they were squeezing the juice out and cooking the syrup off, and he said, when I got there, he said, “You were playing in a play house.” Well, when daddy had built his house, he had extra brick left over, and I had stacked 'em up and made myself a play house. And he likes to tell me to this day, that I was the only kid that had a brick play house. And daddy's old attorney in Nacogdoches, he said the very first time he ever saw me he'd came out to the farm, and he said daddy had me out, and he had me in a peanut trough. And I don't really remember them too much, but what it was, we raised a lot of peanuts, and you had a trough, and it had a wire bottom in it, the wire was big enough that the peanuts through. You'd feed the fodder to the cows—they'd eat it and it'd shake the peanuts off. And they'd fall down on the ground. And then you'd pull the peanuts out from under. He said, I was laying in that trough, that was the first time he saw me!

C I've grown peanuts before, but I've never heard of 'em, like grown around—

W Yeah. Well, we used to grow ‘em. And then you would pull ‘em up. And you would—you’d have a big stake you put in the ground, and you turned the peanuts upside down over the things to get dry, and then you would pick the peanuts off. The government got to regulating peanuts and they would only let you grow so much, and if you over planted, they’d plow ‘em up.

C Kinda like with the cotton and cows.

W Yeah. They had an allotment on ‘em. And you had to rotate where you grew ‘em, because they were a legume and they, you know, it made a difference what you planted in the soil. That was one thing that when Roosevelt came to be our president, they found that we had cultivated our land ‘til we had just killed it, you know, because you planted the same corn field in the same spot every year, and the cotton—and what they wanted you to do was to rotate the crops—it gave the soil better soil building. And then, so much of our soil was washing away in the ‘40s, because of the fields, and they sent, I don’t know, some kind of government program that they came in and put terraces up to keep from washing away.

C I’ve seen a few of those, that you can tell, were terraced.

W Yeah. And there were two of my uncles went to the CCC camp and they thought that that was the best thing. The CCC, I don’t know had many young men by the thousands all over the United States—you joined, I think it might have been for—I don’t know how many months at a time. And they paid you \$35 and up, and you kept \$5 and they sent \$30 back home to your family, because they furnished you a place to live and all the food you could eat, and, they even furnished schooling if you hadn’t done your schooling, they, you know, if you wanted to learn a different things, and most of our National Forest was planted with the CCCs. Roads, and all kinds of things were done. And Uncle Sterling and Uncle Elton worked when they were building Milam Lake—that was one of the CCC projects. And many years later my mother learned to swim there. I thought that was a kind of a play—

C Where is Milam Lake?

W It’s out, you know where Milam is, outside of San Augustine—you called Red Hill Lake. We called it Milam Lake and they changed the name of it a years ago.

C I live on 87 just at Lout Town, down there, but I couldn’t place—I thought you were talking about somewhere around here.

W Oh yeah, and we went on many a time over there, had picnics, went swimming, I hadn’t been over there in years, I guess, it’s probably improved a lot more than it was back then.

C Well, they’re starting—with everything, I think the Sabine River Authority now is the upkeep of it. It’s kinda going down now. But when my daughter was growing up, what she’s 26, but when she was growing up we went there lots of times and camped and let her swim, and it was just really, really nice.

W Oh yeah, they had picnic tables and we learned that if we made a gallon of ice cream here at

home and wrapped it up in plastic real tight, you could take it over there and it would still be—for lunch, you know.

C Well, at one time they had concession stands there, and everything.

W And our favorite, one of my favorite places to go was over at Bland Lake—they had the big pavilion out there where you could dance and then in the summer time where it came out over the water made it shady to play in the water underneath there.

C I had never known that until a couple have mentioned that that was—

W Well, they broke the dam at some time or another and drained it and I understand—I haven't been out there, wouldn't really hardly know, but there was a many a Sunday afternoon that we spent at Bland Lake.

C It's beautiful there now—

W And they still had, I think they ground corn or something with their mill that had the water wheel that was over there.

C Like I say, it's not like what you remember anything now, it's just a private owned lake, but I drive past it almost every day, and those cypress trees—it's beautiful.

W I don't remember how much they charged to go swimming there. And they had a long row of bath houses where you go in there and change into your bathing suit. And they gave you a little wire basket and you put your clothes in it, and you'd take it back there to the concession stand, and they would keep your basket until you got out of swimming.

C Now, they did that at Red Hill when I was a kid, you know, but by the time my daughter was a kid, all that had shut down. There's another question, how do you self identify, did you think of yourself as American, or as a Texan, Louisianan, Spanish, mixed breed, etc.

W Well, I definitely think of myself as an American first, but then I think of myself as a Texan, and a native Texan at that, you know! But, ah, I've always been proud to have been born in America. And one of the things that hurts me to the very core, is to see somebody take our flag and desecrate it. I think that is—I think that ought to be a punishable sin, really and truly. There's been so much bloodshed for that flag, you know. And I get so angry at people—they take it for granted that they have the right to say and do whatever they want to. But somebody has paved the way and paid the price before them, you know. And I had Washington G. Atkinson, he went to the Civil War from here, and he was lucky that he returned. I think we've had people that are buried in our cemetery that's been every war back to the 1776, you know, anyway. But I've always thought Texas was special, and of course I belong to the Daughters of the Republic Of Texas, which, Texas was so unique in the beginning that we stood as a separate country from the United States for 10 years after we won our independence from Mexico. And so I think any of us that ancestors and so forth that lived here in the Republic, during that time, has to be a little proud, that we were really pioneers, for sure.

C I love it here, there's no place else I ever want to live. And when they ask me, how do you self-identify, I say East Texan!

W Yeah, that's right! Well, you know, we were a state in 1845. And my husband came from Oklahoma, and they were not a state until 1907. I told him that they were primitive! Well, they were still the Indian Territory, you know, they just never did declare statehood 'til late. In fact they didn't open up the Cherokee Strip to settle land 'til in the late 1800s, so. Anyway I told him that they had every invention we had invented up there! So, I really am proud to be a native Texas and East Texas is completely different. I had friends that we were visiting in Seattle, and they had come to El Paso, and they thought the whole state was like that, and when they visited us here, they thought they were in a different country, you know. We have a lot of terrain that's different. And I think we have a lot of Louisiana influence here because we're just across the river, you know.

C To me it's just the most beautiful place in the world.

W I think that there are several places on several highways, like there's a place between here and Palestine that you come over a ridge and the (??) just for it, you could think you were in Kentucky or Tennessee or anywhere. And our forest is beautiful and we have pretty lakes and I just like out—we have a few things that I might not want, we have some of these redneck hunters that will shoot anything that comes in their gun sight. And I don't like that. And they will kill game out of season. And, we never had wild game much because daddy couldn't see and we didn't eat squirrels and we didn't kill deer. So I'm still not big on deer hunting. I don't allow anybody to hunt on our property. They're putting down a gas well on the back of our place here and those workers have been just shocked, they said you have 15-16 deer in a herd keeps coming here, and we run 'em away from the site and they keep coming back. And, I said, well, they don't have anything to be afraid of, no one hunts 'em here.

C What about tamales when you were growing up, did your mom make tamales?

W No, she never did. Most of the tamales that were made that we got home made the Moral Catholic Church—the Moral Community that's east—west of Nacogdoches, their ladies—that's how they sponsor their church—all those years, they built a new church, paid for it by making homemade tamales, and I was talking to one of the ladies recently, and she said, we're about to lose this trade, because none of the young women want to do it. Well, one thing, making homemade tamales is very time consuming and most young women today work and they don't have the time that they did. And they don't want to gather for an all day Saturday to make tamales.

C Got other things, raising kids, and washing clothes—

W Yeah. But we never made any homemade tamales. Mother—she wasn't even big about like Christmas time, or whenever we had chicken and dressing, she never made her bread the day before, she got up and made her—she wanted everything fresh that right day.

C You know some of the ladies in the Moral Community?

W Yes, I do.

C And that they still make hot tamales?

W Yes. And they have, once a year, they make 'em and have a fund raiser. And it's gotten to the point that their so limited you nearly have to reserve 'em ahead of time to get any of 'em. Now we've had—well, he was actually a wetback, he was here illegally, and he was working on an adjoining farm over here. And he would take cow heads and put 'em in the ground and bake 'em and like, and he would make tamales out of 'em. But then they made it illegal to get a cowhead. But anyway, it would take him all day long to make maybe several dozen tamales—we'd demolish in an hour! And I had watched him make 'em, and I could see—they—he would cook that cow head and he would cook out meat cavities that you wouldn't even dream that it had meat in it, and use it in making the tamales, you know.

C Do you think some of those ladies would do an interview with us?

W I don't know, I can call Peggy Ariola and see if there's somebody that could do that. I'll call her and they agree or something, I'll call and let you know, okay?

C That would be great. We're trying to—that seems almost, you know, in Texas it was more biscuits and gravey, and ham and beef.

W Yeah. That the Hispanics, for their Christmas celebration they always have tamales on Christmas and New Years, that's a tradition. And, they put out a cook book from the Moral Church, I think I have a copy, and it has a recipe for making tamales, and it's very lengthy and, you know, the whole process of doing it. But I'll get in touch with Peggy and see if there's somebody.

C I would appreciate it. If anybody would talk to us. Like I say, hardly anybody, well, not, what maybe one or two, that they remember their great grandmothers or something making tamales. But that was more on, across the Sabine River, than in these areas here.

W The thing we made here that is nearly a thing of the past, you know, when they killed the hogs and they cooked the meat they would cut up the fat and the skin and everything, and they would cook it to get the—render the lard out, and they you take some of the lard and you would make lye soap with it, and then the skin, why they left it on there, they made cracklings out of it. And I remember mother making crackling cornbread—and it being so good.

C I love crackling cornbread—my grandmother made it always—course she'd have to go to the store, you know, in later years to get cracklings because—oh, it was good.

W Mother had rendered the lard, and she had put in the little half gallon tin cans, and we had it stacked in a closet, and we came home, and she had 80 of those stacked in there, and we came home and someone had broken in the house, and we couldn't find anything they had stolen except those 80 things of lard that she had. And then we came home one time and we came in the back and there was somebody in our house and they had run out the front and they took a pocket knife and just split the screen, they didn't have time to unhook it and they just went through the screen.

And of course during the early '40s and so forth, lot of men were out of work and we had people rambling the country and they were hoboing around. And I can remember a time or two mother would see a suspicious character coming up the road and she would get us by the hand and go out in the pasture somewhere and wait to see if that person was coming by the house or whether they were going on. And she'd give a lot of people going by food, but she never invited them in the house, she'd always feed 'em outside.

C And that home that you grew up in, is it still down there?

W Yes! You can drive on down the road—it's a big red brick house. And it's got white brick that makes a big "A" on the chimney, and that was what this ranch was called, the Big A Ranch, and my daddy with his bad vision could not see a branding iron. And so he took a running iron and he made a big A on the side of the cow. And when he built his house, he put the big white "A" so if he was, somebody coming or cattle buyers they could find it by the big "A" there, you know. And so it's still there, and my niece lives there now. My sister's daughter lives there. So you're welcome to drive on the road—it's got big ole archways and so forth. Daddy was living as a young man, he was not married, he was a bachelor and he came in one day and he always smoked cigars. And he said he laid down on the bed and he was smoking his cigar and a tornado came by and it blew his house away. And he said, when he came to on a clay bank he said he was still clamping that cigar in his mouth, so he built a brick house, and he put a basement to the house, which is very rare in this part of the country. But then after he got it down, he was afraid if all the brick over the carport were to fall up against the door that he wouldn't be able to get out. And back then, there were not that many people going up and down the road, you know, if you saw somebody leaving the morning you nearly knew how long they'd be gone and you'd see 'em going home, you know. So we didn't use it as much, except it was wonderful to put stuff in to keep it cool in the summer time in there.

C What about ghost stories?

W Oh yeah. We used to do those and when we were young we'd have weenie roasts. And we'd build a big fire and we'd sit around after we got through eating—all of the kids and stuff, and we'd start telling ghost stories. And I would get so scared, that I would turn around and put my back to the fire and watch in the dark so nothing would come and get me! We'd tell things like, you know, we were in this big ole house, we had a big ole house here that belonged to daddy's brother Uncle Joe, and it, they'd tell, somebody was coming up the steps—they come up the first step and then the next step and then they wouldn't hear anything, then they'd hear another and you'd come on up steps and all of a sudden, boo! You know, and you'd jump and holler, and so forth. And then, daddy was telling me back when his daddy and them—a lot of times, Negroes would like to visit from one farm to another, and they'd stay out so late they'd get in and they wouldn't be able to get up at daylight to go to work. So out of the Metoyer family down there—anyway, they made a stuffed thing like a headless guy you know, and they used to pull it up and down at the creek and he said his daddy kept that thing up under his bed, you know, and they'd be going through and they'd make weird sounds and those people would just scatter screaming! I guess it went back to the headless horseman, you know, but anyway, there were a lot of ghost stories told back then. And the Black people didn't call 'em ghosts, they called 'em haints.

C And what about superstitions, like black cat crossing the road?

W My sister was so superstitious she—a black cat crossed her path one day going across between here and town, and she drove all the way over and come back across. I never was scared of that. And especially from Irish ancestry. They had a lot of superstition, you know, and it was passed down through the families. I was too curious I'd probably want to find the ghost and made friends with it!

A Just a couple questions. The family from Louisiana that moved here, what was their last name?

W Ah, Coutee. Dennis and Victorine were the ones that came here and they had a pretty large family. And I, you know, as many times as I've visited with them, I never asked them why they came from Louisiana to here. I just, you know, never thought about it. They were just always a part of my growing up life. And I still see some of the family, a lot of 'em still live in Lufkin, and occasionally I see 'em.

A And just one other thing, do have any memories of the POW camp that was here?

W Oh, yes, yes. We had a POW camp out here. And they had about 300 incarcerated out there. And they used 'em in the log woods to help with—we had a bad freeze here, I think it was in 1943 or '46, I can't remember, but there was so much timber that was down, and they used those prisoners to salvage what wood—most of it was for pulpwood and in with the paper mill in Lufkin and the railroad to carry it, that worked out real well. Not hardly any of 'em spoke any English. But, granddaddy had 'em to go out as a work crew to go out with him to work in the logwoods. And we always found that they were very friendly, they whittled little wooden toys and gave us kids and things like that. And we had one of the prisoners that came back here, oh I'm going to say 15 years ago, after he got back to Germany and was freed, he settled in Bolivia and he worked for the Bayer Food Company, or manufacturing company. And he and his wife came back to Chireno and he said—she said that she had a stack of letters about this high that came through the Chireno Post Office that she had kept, and he said that the people were so nice to them, when they were prisoners here. And he said, out of the 300 that they probably had here, that there were maybe 10% that were truly Nazis, you know, the rest of them were just drafted into the army—they didn't want to be in. And the ones that were here were from Rommel's—and they said what we did was find their food supply, and we destroyed their food supply and they were starving to death is why they surrendered. So, they used to have dances out at the PFW and they got chocolate—that we couldn't get chocolate during the war years and they got sugar where we couldn't get very much sugar, and they thought they were hungry and we thought they were getting the good stuff! There's hardly anything that's out there that's they had a, they built a big pond on the Waters'—Mr. and Mrs. Waters owned the land where the site was. But last year we had a marker placed right here in Chireno telling about the Prisoner of War. The, McKinney family owns the property now and they didn't really want the marker on their property because the fact that they were afraid people would get in there and get hurt, might sue 'em or something like that. And it was remote out there—if they put it outside on the road right-of-way they were afraid it would be vandalized, so that's why they didn't put it. But they have a little explanation that it's not on the original site here in Chireno.

C But you know where it is?

W Yes. And when the guy came back that had been here. We took him out there and the only thing there is part of a cement bunker, and we're not really even what that was used for, but the cement's still there. And outside of that, there's nothing, you know. And it was a, we didn't have any kind of fence around it except barbed wire. Where were they going? I mean if you found one on the road, you would know he was a prisoner. I think a lot of people were a little fearful of them. Like, there's one lady that lived out there, was a Crawford, and she said they saw one coming to their house, and they wasn't sure if he was friendly or whether he was going to do some harm, so they hid and didn't answer, but I think they found out later he was lost, he'd got lost and he couldn't find his way back.

C In these woods it's easy to get lost, even with us growing up in 'em!

W And I don't know if we had one try to ever escape here, ah, they were just, pretty well did their job, and they had guards to go out with them, they'd have so many in a work crew, and they'd go out in the morning and they'd take head counts and bring 'em back. And one of the Stricklings lived out there at their time, and one of them gave them one of their uniforms. And we have it up at the Half Way House, it was an original uniform—German uniform. And I think they had seen Mr. Strickling go barefoot a lot, and one day they gave him a pair of boots—they thought he didn't have any shoes!

C Around here everybody goes barefoot!

W You know, it's very common to go barefooted in East Texas in the summer time. And if you'd worn work boots and worked in a field all day, getting home pulling your shoes and socks is a real relief.

C I remember as a kid, it had to be a certain temperature in the spring before they would let us start going barefoot because they said you'd get ground itch.

W We always got a new pair of shoes when school started. And you know we had to break in what you called a new pair of shoes and having to walk in those, and put 'em on, you got to wear 'em around here for an hour or two—that was just torture to make you wear those new shoes! But I guess the leather wasn't as soft or pliable or whatever it is, but I remember having to break in them new shoes before school started. You know, I look back now and wonder why you had to have a new pair, but your foot changed from last year to this year, the size of it.

A One last question, about where your family cemetery is located?

W There's two cemeteries in Chireno, we have one we call the Upper Cemetery on the other side of town, and then we have the Lower Cemetery, which is on this side of the school campus, you turn up the road, and you got right straight in the cemetery.

C Is that where your family's buried?



W Yeah. And my great grandparents, Washington G. and his wife, Mary Newport Dawes Atkinson, are buried down toward the right hand side in an iron fence, and then the rest of the family's buried up on top of the hill, and I always wondered why, and they said their daughter in law was mad at 'em and didn't want to be buried down there with 'em, so that was just oral—but I have grandparents and aunts and uncles, just the whole host of 'em. I have my daddy and my mother and my sister, and then his daddy, and mother and brother and sister and a brother are buried there, and then another brother. And then the Sanders have a row of their family that's buried there. And I had a bench put at the foot of my husband when he died, 'cause I used to just go to the cemetery and ah, in the afternoons, and it was a quiet place for the evening, and they used—we have a paved area that's a circle and everybody in town uses it for walking. And five laps around the circle make a mile. So we go up there and do walking, so I tell 'em, it's not a lonesome cemetery, there's somebody there all the time! And I had on the side of the bench put in memory of our families and I put Jimmy's mother and daddy and my mother and daddy there on it. And my daddy wanted to be buried at his mother's feet, so that's why his grave is right there—and he always wanted to be buried by a tree and there's a big cedar tree there. And he told me never to spend my money buying a flower to put on his grave, just break off a sprig of cedar and lay it on his grave. Anyway, I was scared of cemeteries after my grandmother died that February, and my mother, she was so wise, she started taking me to cemeteries like late in the evenings or on weekends, and you know, people used to put epitaphs on markers and she'd read 'em to me. And then she would tell me stories like, well, this lady died and she had three little children home that she didn't want to, but you know, and she made me understand that death was a natural process of living. And she would tell me such interesting stories that the cemetery got to be like a story book.

C I enjoy going to the old cemeteries.

W Yeah. They don't do that much anymore. They charge so much per letter to put stuff on, but I guess the one that you'd read in more cemeteries than anything, is gone but not forgotten. That is, I said if I'd made a list of 'em. And then I got to noticing a lot of times people in the same month that they were born in, you know, many years later, but it was interesting to see that. Cemeteries have become a friendly place now.

A Well, thank you so much!

W You know I tell 'em that I do like to talk, but I don't think we can appreciate where we are in life if we don't really know where we came from, you know, and everybody had to make sacrifices, you know, to get here. And I was blessed to have a family that was church going and God-fearing and in fact, my father and mother, when they deeded property to my sister and I when we were young, and daddy had a clause in the deed that said it couldn't be sold until I got 30 years old, if it did, it went to the Baptist Church here. So I asked him about that one time, and I said, "Daddy, why would you put that in there?" He said, "I figured that if you didn't have sense by the time you was 30 not to sell it, just go ahead and get rid of it." So, I think that the love of the land—he always felt like you never owned the land, that you were just a steward of it, and he said that you kept it for the next generation, and he said that if you were good to the land, the land would be good to you, you know, so I don't to see wildlife abused or land abused or waste on anything and I'm sure that was from my raising. I remember we were eating an apple one time in the winter time and we used to throw peanut hulls in the fire place and watch 'em burn, and I threw that apple

core in there, and daddy said, "Baby, I'm ashamed of you. Just think of the wildlife that could have enjoyed that." He said, "The birds would eat the seeds." And to this day I can hardly throw anything away. Robert just laughs at me! Because I keep stuff and I carry it out in the pasture. And I leave it and I go back the next day and there's not a sign of anything. Some wildlife has eaten it during the night, you know. It reminds me, I've got to go fill up my birdfeeder!