

Frank Aubrey Massey  
King Massey

interviewed by

Mrs. W. A. Schmidt

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ORAL HISTORIES OF FORT WORTH, INC.

Judge and Mrs. Frank A. Massey  
5101 Curzon  
Fort Worth, Texas 76116

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dob: 1911

Interviewer: Judge Massey, will you share with us a little bit about yourself and why you're so interested in the history of Fort Worth?

Judge Massey: My full name is Frank Aubrey Massey. I was born in 1911 in Ellis County, just outside the extreme southeast corner of Tarrant County. My people moved to Fort Worth when I was five years old. I was the only child and was somewhat observant by nature. I was given a great deal of liberty by my parents to go to downtown Fort Worth since both worked. I was taken by either my father, mother, or grandfather a great many places. My grandparents lived with us.

I have recollections of downtown Fort Worth before World War I and information through personal observation of action taking place in Fort Worth at that time, including the 1917-1918 training of the aviators including Omar Locklear.

My grandfather worked as a carpenter at Camp Bowie. His name was John A. Shackelford, who was born in Georgia and came to Texas when my mother was only about five years old. It was in 1895 as I recall. When I was five, approximately 1917, I went to the west part of Fort Worth and observed Camp Bowie being constructed. There was nothing except scattered farm houses to the west from old Camp Bowie on the slope adjacent to what we call Camp Bowie Blvd. and just west of what is today University Drive. The movies of that time were of tremendous interest to me. Fort Worth had the Palace Theater, the Majestic Theater (then devoted to stage plays) and several small hole-in-the-wall type theaters for the new motion picture shows. The one I recall specifically, because I got in for 5¢, was the Blue Mouse which was located on Houston Street just north from Ninth. I spent many a pleasant afternoon in the movie house seeing the same show three times, sitting on a straight back wooden chair. You entered from the street, passing underneath the screen to your seat. A rinky-dink piano played for the majority of the time while the picture was on the screen, being played by musicians of various degrees of accomplishment. This was long before sound theaters. We did have street cars at that time which ran by electricity supplied by poles. There was no such thing as a bus and very few lines for the streetcars. The Camp Bowie line was extended from Fort Worth to the field where Camp Bowie was constructed for the soldiers to get to and from town. I recall that the streetcar was maybe some six to eight feet above the level of the streets which ran along both sides. About 1/3 of the time these were under water; the only dry means of passing by was on the streetcar service. This was before the days of the dikes which prevented the river from seeping and flowing into the lowlands lying to the west.

Of course, I have the most vivid recollection of what Fort Worth was like when I was ten years old in 1921. At that time very few houses had been built in western Fort Worth and Arlington Heights, immediately to the west of the Camp Bowie. The streetcar line was extended on out to the top of the hill of Ridglea West about then. On the south side of town a good many people lived. In north Fort Worth we had stores and a little settlement where people traded; even a bank, as I recall, which was about a block from where they later built the areas for the initial Fort Worth Stock Show and Rodeo. In that part of town you found the cowboys and people dressed as they did to work in the country with cattle. They went to and from the Stockyards area. The

houses in that part of town were to the north and to the west of the Stockyards area and in Diamond Hill. Principally they lay toward the west from Main Street, which has always been a very wide street, and in the area where the old original North Side High School on 21st Street was located. I think perhaps it was later called the old Tech Building. North Side High School, and what was then Central High School, and Polytechnic High School were all we had. Not too many students attended Polytechnic High School.

I do not remember when Central burned; it must have been before 1924 because, by the time I entered Central High School, two wings had been added. They were built in 1927. Central is now called Technical High School. The great rivalry was between Central High School and North Side High School in football. Polytechnic had a team--this was in 1926-1927--which lost every year, year after year. About 1927, Arlington Heights was built and it had a team which suffered the same sort of treatment that Polytechnic did. Those were the four high schools in Fort Worth in 1928.

This was before the Depression, and Fort Worth prospered. Everyone in those times went to downtown Fort Worth if they went to stores, except for the grocery stores which were scattered in all areas. The automobile was a comparative rarity, though there were some. Service stations were few and far apart; in many of them gas was drawn from a pump up and into a can and poured from a can into the automobile. I recall the development where gas was pumped up into an elevated tank and then ran from that pump into the car. You could see the gasoline run down from the glass container and markers on it measured the gas.

There was a small shopping center in Polytechnic located in the area immediately south of TWC, Texas Wesleyan University now, then Texas Wesleyan College. On the south side of Fort Worth you had no shopping center. Everyone worked downtown in Fort Worth. At least the great majority of people who worked in downtown Fort Worth lived on the south side. The residential area extended into what is called Lakeview today. It was a brand new addition in 1925-1926, lying primarily on Magnolia Street west from Evans Avenue. This new addition was my home when I was about eight or nine years old.

Interviewer: Why did they call it Lakeview? Was there a view of the lake around there?

Judge Massey: Well, there was, but it was more of a pond than a lake; it lay immediately south of Magnolia Avenue and somewhere in the vicinity immediately north of Rosedale.

The main stores in downtown Fort Worth were Meacham's and Monnigs; my mother worked at both stores when I was a small child. My father was a barber. His shop was in downtown Fort Worth at the corner of 10th and Houston Streets. The nature of his work was such that it was most convenient for me to roam downtown Fort Worth in those days, go to the shows, and a feeling of security because I could always find my father at the barber shop. In 1926 and 1927-28 (incidentally, I graduated from high school in 1928; I was only 16 years old at the time) I was allowed a great deal of liberty in downtown Fort Worth for a youngster my age, and I spent it at the library and attending theaters. By 1928 downtown had grown; there was a good many more picture shows. I remember

one was the Hippodrome, which was my favorite. It was on Main Street a half-block south from 10th Street. They began to show motion pictures at the Majestic, Palace, and the new Worth Theater built about 1927.

The big event for Fort Worth was the construction of the Casino on Lake Worth. I think it was about 1926, maybe 1927, that they had what they called the mile-long boardwalk patterned after Atlantic City's boardwalk. I've never been to Atlantic City, so I'm not sure. At one end was the dance pavillion. This was the original one, all built of wood. This was destroyed by fire. Later there was one built to replace it which was like it. That one was also destroyed by fire. In other words, the one which was destroyed about 1972 was the third dance floor built. It was the original as I mentioned, which had the mile-long boardwalk, which was not that long, of course. It was approximately 600 feet long, or maybe twice that. The whole length of the boardwalk on the north side was in the nature of carnival shows and activities all in a line. On the south side was a railing at which you could look out over the lake.

The item of particular interest to me at that time was the roller-coaster. To this day I have never seen anything to compare it with. It ran straight from the vicinity of the dance floor area toward the west to the extreme west end of the boardwalk in a series of ups and downs, then it made a turn and came back. It had none of the jerking to the side so common to most roller-coasters. The car had very severe drops but no jerks.

When they originally built this dance floor, it was the dime-a-dance type. No tables or seating, nothing inside the railing except the dance floor. After each dance everyone left the floor by a number of gates; to re-enter for the next dance. Each person dropped a ticket for which he paid 10¢ into a small container. I believe that it started out as a nickel. Anyway, the ticket admitted him and his partner for one dance; 10¢ for a couple for one dance. The girls and the boys too in those days, '27 and '28, could dance so well it would be hard to believe by the young people today. This was in the days of Ginger Rogers, who is still going pretty strong, and she was one of the best of the dancers. She lived in Dallas but came often to Fort Worth. Anyway, a girl who was one of the popular dancers would promise dances to boys by number of dances from time of her promise. She kept the memory of it in her head--she would line up ten and fifteen dances ahead. The girls became so proficient they knew exactly who followed whom and who was the next boy should be she was having a dance with. The boys were not quite as expert at knowing whose dance it was. They were always trying to get the girls they wanted a little early.

We had all the very best orchestras of the time. We'll never again see the like of it. We had Louie Armstrong, Lawrence Welk, Sammy Kaye, Nick Stewart, Herbie Kay, the Dorsey Brothers, Harry James, and others. The old time big bands that started when people knew how to dance had the kind of music by which to dance. Sitting at the tables and drinking was not done. If you went to a dance you had no place to sit down. Those who didn't dance stood around the dance floor. At the Casino you weren't really out in the weather when you were off the floor; you had a covered area some twelve to fifteen feet out from the dance floor which was covered. There people milled and walked around all the time. This was the area in which dance partners arranged the time for their dances.

This was in the days of Prohibition; those who drank hard liquor would usually go somewhere and hide and drink it in secret, which I did many times. That was Fort Worth as I recall it and I loved it.

Now here is a thing of the past, very popular in those days, called "making the drag." Anyone who had an automobile and nothing better to do would either, by himself or with a sizable group, take the automobile and go to downtown Fort Worth and "make the drag." This meant driving from one end of Main Street to the other, from the north end near the courthouse to the south end, being the Texas and Pacific Railroads. The drive was up and down Main from one end to the other. You did not drive on Houston; you drove on Main. You went north on Main and you went South on Main. The promenaders would all be walking up and down the street, and if you saw someone you knew, they climbed in the car with you and made the drag. One time there would be one group in the car; then another and then another. Those who had outstanding automobiles would leave them in high gear, step out the door and walk along side the car. While walking one would guide the steering wheel. A good car would run so slowly and smoothly you could do that.

I recall a Martha Washington Candy Store on Main Street; there was what I believe was called the Tiffany Candy Store, between 10th and 11th on Main Street. I vividly recall the latter because I got poisoned on something I ate there when I was about 8 or 9 years old; ptomaine or something, and I almost died. Nobody dreamed of asking that my bills be paid by the candy store. People were definitely not claim-conscious or law suit-conscious. The Greek or Italian managers sold ice creams and candy, and had the most beautifully clean candy store. This was where I got ptomaine.

Interviewer: If you graduated in 1928, when did you decide you wanted to go into law?

Judge Massey: I don't know how it fits into this. I had no idea what I was going to do when I got out of high school. We didn't know it, but the Depression was on its way. Anyway, in 1928 one who had no training was finding it very hard to find employment. I got my first 1928 job late that summer wrapping packages at Montgomery Ward. I proved to be a poor package wrapper as my fingers were "mostly thumbs." In view of this circumstance, I was looking for a different job and found one with Mr. D. S. Landis, who was then in charge of the Weather Bureau Station in Fort Worth. I started to work for the Weather Bureau in September 1928 and worked here for a year and a half; then passed an examination, got promoted in-grade, and moved to Mobile, Alabama. There I had difficulties with the official in charge and returned to Fort Worth. I was idle about three months until I was reassigned to Amarillo. I stayed there for one year; then was transferred to Love Field in Dallas. I was not too happy with that type of work.

I had a cousin in Austin, Texas, an independent insurance adjustor, who told me that if I would start taking a correspondence course in law that, at his first opportunity, he would employ me. So I did start taking a correspondence course from LaSalle Extension University, and did go to Austin and go to work for him for a year. By that time I had become interested in completing the law course so I kept working on it even after the year of work for my cousin

and after going into business for myself in Abilene. I continued with my studies, passed the bar examination in 1935, and became an attorney. I never seriously practiced law until after I returned from World War II service and settled in Fort Worth to stay in 1945. I was away from Fort Worth approximately ten years. Being away doesn't mean I was gone continuously, because at least once a month I came home except during the time I spent in Amarillo and Alabama.

Evidently I was very fond of my home town, because there never was as homesick a boy as I was when I went away to Alabama the first time; it was almost as bad when I was away in Amarillo.

Interviewer: Well, I think we all love Fort Worth, and this is why we are trying to record these things and the changes. Now what would you say your official title would be now?

Judge Massey: My title is Chief Justice of the Court of Civil Appeals, Second Supreme Judicial of Texas, located in Fort Worth.

Interviewer: Very interesting; it really is. Well, let's continue then with some of the things that you remember because you have a very vivid memory. Evidently the lake had not been formed for too long a time before they built the Casino there.

Judge Massey: Oh, yes, they did. The lake was there when I was a very small child, probably there before World War I. I recall when I was in the Boy Scouts about 1922 or 1923, there was a Scout camp on the lake where we sent then.

Interviewer: You have seen a lot of changes in Fort Worth. When you were a little boy and had all this freedom, do you recall if they still had the wagon yards down close to the courthouse?

Judge Massey: It did not amount to very much by then. I think it was west of the courthouse, the one that I recall. There were never more than five or six wagons that would be there overnight in the little lot. I think that people sold things off the back end of those wagons mostly.

Interviewer: I vividly remember seeing the Frenchman's Well when we first came to Fort Worth. Later, I found a letter from Howard Peak in our D.A.R. scrapbook, saying he remembered many times having drunk from that well because the well and their first school were right there together.

Judge Massey: I seldom ventured north of Sixth Street as a youngster until they built the theater called the Phillips-Egypt. There I saw my first talking picture. It seems to me it was either on Fifth or Sixth Street just off Main; possibly east of Main. The entrance was off the side street.

Interviewer: Did your family continue to live out in the Lakeview Addition?

Judge Massey: Until I was about twelve when my parents split up. I moved with my mother to the South side. I was living within a mile of Central High School through the time I went to junior high, which was then for two years; and then senior high. The William James Junior High is where I attended junior high. Eighth Ward was where I went the last two or three years of grade school.

Interviewer: You've done a great deal of research on your own family. Could you tell me what period of time it encompasses?

Judge Massey: Back in my family line to 1086 (A.D.) in England, the Domesday Book in England for Chessir County, at a place called Dunham-Massey.

Interviewer: Is there anything that you can think of of interest that might fit in here, such as cases that have been of particular importance?

Judge Massey: Not relating to this subject at all. Before I was a judge, I was appointed to defend one of the more famous murderers in this county. His name was Robert Barber. It was in 1950, I believe. He was living with his wife and small daughter in the Meadowbrook area of Fort Worth and working as a printer in some shop in downtown Fort Worth. Two officers from Dallas came seeking him; they had a lead on him as having been involved in a highjacking at a cafe in Dallas, and got two officers in Fort Worth to go with them out to the house. Incidentally, they neglected to get a warrant before they left Dallas or anytime prior to this. Barber said they broke in the house and they said they were invited in. One officer went into the bedroom and bathroom area of the house, and Barber, was convicted of having shot him. That officer died instantly. Then he came out of the bathroom area and shot two other officers inside the house, both very seriously (one was a Fort Worth officer); then he came outside and surrendered to the other officer from Dallas who had escaped from the house. He, himself, was shot and taken to the St. Joseph's Hospital where he was under guard of a Deputy Sheriff. After about two or three days he overcame the deputy; took his clothes and locked him in the closet and escaped from the hospital. He took a car away from a woman in the hospital parking lot. He evidently got lost on some country roads in the southern part of the county. By this time all policemen were out hunting him. They did recapture him and put him in jail. All the money found in the house was taken under the charge that it had been taken in the highjacking in Dallas, so he was without funds and had no attorney. A lawyer from Dallas who started with the case left and would not go forward with it. Judge Dave McGee, the Criminal District Judge here, appointed me to defend him. This was very odd, for I had no prior criminal practice whatsoever. I was a civil lawyer and had never even tried a criminal case. But I was appointed to defend him and did so. The case received a great deal of publicity. The crowds for each day of the trial (which lasted a week) were so great that not everyone could get in the courtroom. Barber was convicted and given 50 years. By this time he had also been charged with the highjacking in Dallas. To that charge he pleaded guilty and took a concurrent 75 years.

Incidentally, at that time I was paid \$10 per day for the time in the courtroom, nothing for preparing for trial. The case cost me a good deal of money out of

my own pocket. That kind of unfairness has been remedied in these days and an attorney appointed as a defender is sufficiently paid. Barber spent over 11 years in the penitentiary and then parolled. He was at a drive-in theater in Houston when someone walked up and filled him full of bullets. I don't believe they ever caught whoever it was that did it.

Interviewer: I well remember that because it was a very publicized event.

Judge Massey: It was in the same year that I defended Barber that I was elected to public office.

Interviewer queries Judge Massey of his recollections of the aviation industry.

Judge Massey: In 1917 I was only six years old, but I do recall the planes and Omar Locklear; because, for some reason or other, he was my hero. But no more can I recall than that.

I was interested for some time in the growths of the schools, particularly the high schools, here in Fort Worth. I've always felt that I had a material part in creating Eastern Hills High School at the place where it is. I had a home immediately to the north and saw the area there on which a man ran a few horses. He was holding for an investment I suppose. I went down to see Mr. Williams and Superintendent Moore and told them that I thought they ought to build a high school there; and lo and behold, it wasn't six months until the newspaper announced they had bought it; and not only were they planning to build a high school there, but an elementary school also. The latter plan, on the elementary school, was one with which I strongly disagreed. It was, of course, very convenient for my children to go to school because all they had to do was walk right out of my back yard onto the school grounds with no need to cross a street.

Interviewer: To overcome the problem they changed the time schedule for the high school and elementary school so there would not be so much traffic there, but it is a very congested area in the mornings and the afternoons. I was very happy to see the schools placed there, too, because we needed a school in the area very badly.

Judge Massey: I didn't know if I was getting through to, I believe Mr. Williams was the man's name, but I felt like I got through to Superintendent Moore all right. Later on, after the deed was accomplished, a letter came from Mr. Williams that he had indeed been interested and had gone out to look at the location. He just didn't allow the news to get out that there was interest until it had been bought through a blind grantee; that's the way things are done.

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Mrs. Frank Massey

Interviewer: Mrs. Massey has a very interesting family heritage due to the fact that she was the child of her parents in their later years. So Mrs. Massey, I think I am going to just turn it over to you and let you talk, rather than my asking you questions because you heard me talking with your husband and you know what we're interested in.

Mrs. Massey: Well, I want to tell you something about my parents, grandparents, and great-grandparents. I don't know that I know too much about Fort Worth history, and I can't do anything but put a little color in it maybe. My father was Eli Phillip King, and he came to Fort Worth when he was about twenty years old from Arkansas with the purpose in mind to work at Swift's. They were building Swift's Packing Plant, and that was his first job. Now, he moved on to Palo Pinto County after that. My mother was Emma Walker. Her father was J. D. Walker, and his father was Hiram Walker. Hiram Walker was the brother of Albert Gallatin Walker who surveyed Tarrant County in 1849 or 1850. Now I don't know too much about my great-grandfather; it's mostly of his brother, Albert Gallatin, that I do know. In 1850 he surveyed Tarrant County, cutting it off from Navarro. Navarro County was 29 or 30 counties, I don't remember. But anyway, he surveyed the southeast and northern boundaries of the upper Trinity Valley and he got 640 acres for making the survey. These acres were located west from Birdville High School stadium; that would be the south boundary, taking in where Richland Shopping Center is, and go back over, I guess, to that street where parking was in front of the school. Anyway, it ran north from Highway 183 up that way. Albert Gallatin and my great-grandfather are both buried right across the highway in the old Birdville Cemetery near the swimming pool. They're both buried there in that old cemetery. My great-grandfather bought a place on Davis Blvd. up from North Richland Hills. Albert Gallatin owned a farm there which he sold to his brother who was my great-grandfather, Hiram Walker. And in turn my grandfather owned it for a while.

Now this Albert Gallatin is more important to Tarrant County history than to Fort Worth's. He was owner of the "Birdville Union" newspaper and was editor. In 1857 he shot the editor of another paper. That would have been two papers in Birdville in 1857. John J. Courtney owned the "Western Express", the name of his paper. Mr. Courtney was associated with a paper in Dallas, and Dallas had been supporting Fort Worth for the county seat of Tarrant County. Albert Gallatin wanted the county seat kept in Birdville. I believe, at least a little later, Albert Gallatin was Senator and had quite a commotion over Fort Worth getting the county seat. Seems that he had proof--he'd gone out and hunted down the names of all those people who had voted for Fort Worth, and they were from Stephenville and Denton and all that sort of thing. Also Birdville and Fort Worth had wagon loads of liquor to give to the voters and Fort Worth men had found where the Birdville men had stashed their liquor in the woodpile and stolen it and brought it into Fort Worth, which left Birdville without any liquor at all for their voters on that day. Anyway, that's what the killing was about--the county seat. I haven't found that there was even an inquest over it. I don't believe there was anything done about it. It settled an argument as far as my great-uncle was concerned; that he put the man out of business.

I read his speech that he made down in Austin while he was Senator, trying to get at least another election on moving the county seat back. By that time

everything was out of Birdville and it was not ever done. Now Albert Gallatin was pro-Union. His paper, all the way, was preaching stay out of the Civil War or if the Union does break up you'll never make it. And from that time right after the Civil War, he was County Clerk in Fort Worth and Tarrant County. Then anyone who had been on the Confederate side couldn't hold office. He was County Clerk for many years--I don't know how many.

Interviewer: Where was your dad all this time?

Mrs. Massey: This was my great-grandfather, Hiram Walker. I don't know much about him. I know where his place was. He managed to stay off the census. His son, my grandfather, was born down around Burleson, but I can't find any records of him; I just know that he was here in 1855. A Hiram Walker was on the jury list. Anyway, he died when my grandfather was twelve years old. In 1873, and my grandfather was born in 1861. My grandfather's mother stayed on this farm out what is now Davis Blvd.

By the way, I want to tell you that the Davises out there for whom the Blvd. is named, Joseph McKee Davis and wife, Charlotte Conditt, were also my great-grandparents. Charlotte Conditt Davis was in Sacramento, California, back in the late 1860's or early 1870's. Her father had had a farm in Sacramento, several years after the gold rush in California. He was of German descent and couldn't speak English. He had a farm out there, and somewhere in the river that ran through the farm he found gold. And as I understand it, Joseph McKee Davis was working for him. I don't know exactly the connection, but Joseph McKee Davis, some of his brothers and friends and some of the Conditts--drove horses from California to Texas, and he had arranged for his wife, Charlotte, to ride the train. When she got to Texas the train only came to Dallas; it didn't come to Fort Worth. When she got to Dallas she was to contact the Masons there, and they would help her find her husband. He didn't know where he would go in Texas; he had arranged for her to wait three or four months and then come on for he had no idea where he would try to locate, but he would have a farm and would put the word out where he was. Her father sold his farm in Sacramento.

I can't find their relationship with the Mormon church, but I am sure there is one because there is one all the way with the Davises; they moved all the way to Salt Lake City, and then on to California with the Mormons. Now somewhere the Conditts come into it, because he sells his farm and goes to Utah to live in one of the Mormon cities.

When Charlotte left Sacramento, her father gave her gold nuggets and she quilted them into her skirts and her daughter's skirts and her sister who was also with her; all of them brought gold nuggets quilted in their skirts. Then when they had to stop and would have to have some money they would go in the restroom and pinch out a nugget because they didn't have any money at all because of the train robberies. She did locate her husband Joseph, out near Smithfield; that's where they are both burried, in a Methodist cemetery, I believe. The stones are still standing. The Davises and Walkers had farms that were adjoining, and the boundary line between the two farms still exists. It is marked by a huge oak tree that divides the little lane that comes up to the F.M. road; where it separates and divides the Walker and the Davis property line.

Now, my grandfather took me with him one day when I was small in prohibition days, when I was five or six. He told me that he wanted to see where he had lived when he was a boy; we went down below the bluff where our courthouse is now, by the river down there where he played when he was a boy. The old house was standing that he had lived in. As I said, I was a small child and I didn't know to watch out for anything, but he walked up to the door and the door came open and a man said for us to get in there so we walked into the house. Now the house was empty; there wasn't any furniture, and I didn't realize at the time that it wasn't an invitation--we were told to come in. The house didn't impress me; like I said, it was empty. I thought it had a bunch of old hot water heaters in it; but it was bootleggers. Later on a man came out of a door that I had thought was shut and walked into the corner of what was the kitchen. Evidently he had been standing there behind the door with a shotgun. My grandfather told him that he was raised as a boy down there and that was his home and he just wanted to look at it. At first, we didn't see but one man, and then the second one, and then after a while there were several. They may have been outside. Like I say, that was just part of the color I wanted to show, that things did go on in those days.

Also about that time, maybe a little later, I lived over on Broadway between College and Henderson. There was a little girl who lived across the street from me, and I couldn't play with her because her parents always went dancing at Crystal Springs. Crystal Springs was a nudist colony at the time. It later turned into Stagecoach Inn which burned; now it's a little fishing hole out here on White Settlement Road. I couldn't play with her because her parents went to this nudist colony. Also they drank; beer, I suppose. I had gone home and told my daddy about this big old churn that had stuff that swelled up and would go down and swell up and go down, so that was off limits from then on. I couldn't go over there. However, it didn't stop me from playing with her.

Also I remember on College and Pennsylvania was a drugstore on the corner. Now when I was little, in the days of the Depression, we were so poor we didn't know what poor was. I remember my daddy, who was 61 years old. (He raised me while my mother and brothers and sisters all worked.) My daddy and I took long walks, but anyway, this had been a drugstore a few blocks from us there and we were walking on the opposite side of the street. You couldn't walk on that corner because the people were lined up and had pails and kettles and pots and pans and were going in this drugstore. As they came out they would have a loaf of bread under their arms and something in their little kettles. It was one of the soup lines during Depression days. Daddy told me those were "poor folks". I think the Christmas before there were eight of us in the family and we had one pound of sausage for Christmas Dinner; that was a treat. Those poor people were "poor folks".

Something else--the first school I went to was Daggett. If anybody had a purpose in life I found mine when I was about five or six, in 1931 or 1932. I am the cause of all the children having to have diptheria vaccinations. I went to school with diptheria. I don't know why the teacher didn't know it. I didn't know what was going on all day. My daddy used to walk and meet me every evening a few blocks down Broadway to Daggett. The evening that I was so sick, he didn't, and I was real late. I'd sit down and sleep and I'd walk a little further and I'd sit down and sleep and I'd walk a little further.

It's a wonder I lived through it. I had diptheria at a time when I had asthma and the antitoxin that they gave you reacted on anybody that had asthma and I had a tracheotomy; Elizabeth Taylor and I both have one. I was choking when they got me to the hospital at St. Joseph's. There was a Dr. Schink that my mother called. There was Dr. McKee who had been over in Palo Pinto Co. and my mother knew of him and she had called him. We rode with he and with his son in a little car. I couldn't even get my breath, much less talk. We were going through Forest Park, and I remember the curb and the johnson grass had fallen down. I was trying to ask my mother where we were going; the Doctor was trying to understand what I was saying, and she told him as she understood me. I know when we got to the hospital a man reached out and took me out of my mother's arms and put me on a stretcher; as they started through the door they started making an incision through my throat. I didn't know what a hospital was or a doctor or anything, and all I remember was that we went in an elevator with people all around, and I thought they were sweating blood because my throat was squirting blood on them. They were trying to get me to be quiet, but I didn't understand and all I thought was, if they are doing this to me, what are they doing to my mother? I was too suffocated to feel any pain. I don't remember any pain.

Interviewer: How long was this after the day you were so late coming home from school?

Mrs. Massey: Oh, that was the same evening; I was already choked with diptheria. They gave the antitoxin and had to operate on me. I was trying to say "mama" and I could see what looked like a hole in the door and I was trying to look that way and they were trying to hold my head so they didn't cut my vocal chords. I don't know, I suppose they couldn't give me anesthetic, which probably made matters worse. I saw my brother in the door and when he saw me looking at him, he came on in while they were trying to make him stay out. He just came on in anyway and said, "I'll tell you what, sister, if they hurt you I'll throw them out of that window over there." So I quieted down, but he understood that I was wanting mama, and so he told me mama was outside and that was the last of that.

I remember the roller rink during these Depression years, across the street north of old Daggett school. I don't know if it's still there. There they were having these dances--marathons--and of course, people would do anything to make money. If you had a penny you put it in the box and went in and looked at the people faint dead away on their feet or drag each other around the dance floor.

I also remember the human flies that climbed the buildings when I was a little child. They just took up a collection out in the crowd. This would be on a Sunday afternoon. The building I remember most was the one on Houston Street and right across from the Flatiron Building. I know he climbed up that one and on up the Continental Bank Building. I know they held off the time of it for a long time because there wasn't any money in the pot. Seems like maybe two hours after the time that the man was going to climb the building, they were still begging for donations. He'd climb up the outside of the building where the brick stuck out to make the design. He'd have to go over the window and then get back. It was a way of getting some money.

Judge Massey: I'm reminded of the day before Prohibition in Fort Worth. I came to town with the father of my uncle. He did love his liquor, and they were selling out all the beer or whatever they had in all the liquor stores. My cousin and I rode with him in the car to Fort Worth. He had one particular liquor store that he went to and he loaded that car up to such a point to where there was just room for him to sit and drive back home in the driver's seat and no longer room in the car for my cousin and me. It was a soft top car so we climbed on top of the whiskey cases and crowded in between the very top of the whiskey and underside of the soft top on the Ford and rode all the way home to Mansfield in that position.

The town was swarming, at least in the liquor stores, with people who were buying whatever they could afford to buy and haul it home. The grandfather of my cousin had borrowed all the money he could to fill the car with whiskey. That was before the people knew there were possibilities in home-brew. They thought that would be all and they would ever have of spirits of any kind.

Another thing remembered; I had another uncle who was a veterinarian. I recall that one evening when we were coming back from doctoring an animal, somewhere it got dark and he got out and lit the headlights of the car with a match.

Mrs. Massey: The first hanging in Fort Worth was witnessed by my grandfather who was raised below the bluff. I don't remember what he had done. I'm sure my grandfather remembered but I don't know if he ever told me. This was an official hanging, the first in Fort Worth, and there wasn't a place to hang him, so they had to take him to the nearest tree, which was several blocks down south of the courthouse.

My other great-grandfather Walker owned land at Smithfield which he had bought from his brother, but he lived in Fort Worth: I don't know what he did. My grandfather got a part of this land from his father. His father died by the time he was 12 and the Davises lived at that time out on the farm. I suppose that is what kept him in Fort Worth was the father's work. Before he was 12 my grandfather lived below the courthouse which was all houses. Later they lived on the farm, so I suppose it was my great-grandfather's work in Fort Worth. He must have probably "shoed" horses as my grandfather knew about that. All that I can find indicates these of my people must have had good educations for they surveyed land and one edited the newspaper. At least they could read and write. Another branch of Walkers married into the Baird family. Once there was both a Walker Bread Company and a Baird Bread Company.

Anyway, this farm out by Smithfield was where my great-grandmother, my grandmother and her children, and my great-grandfather lived. My great-grandfather would have been very old, understand, for he was in his sixties when my grandfather was born. He died when my grandfather was about 12. Their neighbors to them were the Davises who had come from California. Now the Davises helped take care of my grandmother, helped her with the small kids. My grandfather was the oldest, and there were three boys and a girl who would have been younger than he was. My grandfather married Evelyn Davis when she was about 13 and he was 15 or 16. He bought part of the land from his mother and they lived there at that place up above Smithfield for maybe six years. My grandmother and grandfather lost three children of a fever. The early history of this county mentions malaria and typhoid. They had lost their first three children before my mother was born and she, herself, was very sick. The

doctor told them if they wanted to keep their children alive, they had better get out of the area if they were figuring on raising their children.

It was about 1890 when they moved to Palo Pinto County. They bought land over there when my mother was about two years old, and that was where she was reared. My father's people, the Kings, are buried at Mt. Gilead Cemetery. The King side of the family, my father's people, did go on to Palo Pinto County. He was just here like for a year or something like that. He and his sister first came from Arkansas and built and he worked on the Swift's Packing House building. He was born in 1866, and this would have been about 1886. They stayed in Palo Pinto County until I was three and they moved back to Fort Worth. When I was 14 we moved back there to Palo Pinto County. People have recently been doing a lot of work on records of the cemeteries there.

The Bicentennial has interested a lot of folks in wondering, "From whence did I come?" and they start by discovering one ancestor and find a whole bunch of them.

Judge Massey: 150 years ago the majority of people never went more than 20 miles from the place of their birth.

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