

Joseph Kimbrough Winston

interviewed by

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ORAL HISTORIES OF FORT WORTH, INC.

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Joseph Kimbrough Winston  
Eighty eight years

JOSEPH K. WINSTON

I was born on February 8, 1887. I'd like to claim Tarrant County, but my father happened to be across the line, teaching school and starving in Wise County, so I was born there, but the family had settled here in 1877 on my father's side. My mother was a native Texas. She was Lillie Frazer, born in Marshall, Texas. Her father was District Judge there during the war between the states. He died in 1870, and at the time he was District Judge there were only 28 District Judges in the whole state of Texas. After his death my mother moved to Tarrant County. The Van Zandt family was natives of Marshall, you know. Mrs. Clow, who was a sister of the Major Van Zandt, was a close friend of my grandparents. My mother and father were introduced to each other at the home of Mrs. Clow.

When I was a small boy nearly everybody in Fort Worth was from somewhere else and they had no way of tracing people in those days. There were a lot of people here that had been in trouble back East, and in those days if you could get to Texas you were on your own. There were scarcely any natives here. A man drifted in here by the name of Walker who was an alcoholic. He had a job working in the Gause Liberty Stable, just currying horses and cleaning them up. As time went on he quit drinking and went to practicing as a veterinarian surgeon, and he was so good at it that the regular licensed men's practice was hurt. He married, had two little children, and accumulated quite a bit of property. But he died and his widow left here. I mention him because she never did believe his name was Walker. She was satisfied he was originally from Virginia. After years and years the daughter was here trying to get some clue, somebody that knew her father, and they referred it to me. I knew him and how successful he was and what a wreck he was when he came here, but I couldn't give her any information as to whether for sure his name was Walker or what it was. Those kinds of cases were rather common, and we have some monuments out here that date back to 1879. Now that is before this cemetery was recorded as a cemetery. It's possible they had lots of private cemeteries, and they may have been even moved into that group, but anyway it's a very old cemetery. People had hard times and they just had to help each other in those days.

John Peter Smith was an early day settler here, a smart man, and proved to be a very wise and helpful man in making this town grow and get established. He gave 30 acres of ground down there as the original start of this cemetery. In those days we called it a city cemetery. He also gave some land adjoining it for a Negro cemetery and on the other south end there--the Catholics--he gave them three acres of land for a cemetery. As time went on the town grew and by gifts and donations managed to buy more and more. This became known as East Oakwood Cemetery because there was a county road running through there that separated what they had acquired over there, so they called this East Oakwood and that across the road is West Oakwood. The Catholic Cemetery is Calvary and the Negro Cemetery was Trinity. Some of the more prominent Negroes are in there--one was a very expensive monument to Gooseneck Bill McDonald. He was a banker in Paris, Texas. A New York lady there owned a railroad--Texas Midland I think they called it. Goose-

*Relly Green*

neck was a Republican and was representing her in her business affairs. Since he had a bank, as time went on he moved to Fort Worth and established a bank here on the corner of Ninth where the Texas Brewing Company used to be. He built that monument. Some of his relatives, his son, I think, and maybe his mother are buried there. Great big massive slabs all over it, very expensive --one of the most expensive monuments in the whole cemetery. When he passed away they buried him there, but none of the family saw fit to put any slab over his grave.

There's a number of other prominent Negroes. I've always felt very kindly towards that place because I know how hard life was for the average Negro in those days. I used all the influence I had to get the city to do something. It's still being used and well cared for by the Park Department. The Board of Cemetery let me appoint a committee to go down to the City Hall and ask them to help us get this cemetery; they turned me down for two years. Finally they did appoint a committee; I went down there and asked them to take care of the abandoned lots out here, mow them four times a year. So they took it under advisement and the result was they appointed a committee to meet with a committee of ours. I had written them a letter asking them for four times a year mowing all abandoned lots; they finally agreed to do that. It went along that way for eight years, well really nine. Then the Park Board decided they wanted to change the situation. They decided to ask to let them care for the Trinity Negro Cemetery and what was the original 30 acres. Our Board agreed to let them do this. I objected on the grounds that over half this cemetery was abandoned anyway, and their plea was they wanted to get it condensed so we wouldn't have to move back and forth. Well, I told them, "Over half of it is your responsibility--why don't you just take 32 our of 74 and take care of it?" But they wouldn't do it. They took 16 our of 74 and that has thrown added work on our workman.

What few endowments we have were based on \$2 a day for an hour's work. Now we're paying \$2.57 an hour. So you see inflation has ruined us. It makes it impossible for us to keep it like we'd like to.

I knew nearly all these people and the majority of them were mighty kind to my family. Along in 1898 my father was elected County Tax Collector here. He was J. K. Winston. His father was named Joseph Kimbrew Winston and they named him Joe Kimbrew Winston. When I came along they named me Joseph Kimbrew Winston. My grandfather and grandmother on my father's side were buried down here in 1885, and I have an aunt that was buried there about 1888, I think. My mother was buried here in 1910 and my father was buried here in 1921 and my wife was buried here in 1966.

I retired from the implement business 26 years ago and was buying and selling farms. When I was doubling my money I thought I was smart to sell them, but time has proven I was dumb, that I should have kept them. In the meantime--well, I've just been in all sorts and lines of work--horses, mules, dairy,



cattle. I'm just a Texan. That's all there is to it.

In one way, I really got started here because of my family having been buried here. When my mother died in 1910 I had a little discussion with my father about where she should be buried. At that time Greenwood was just beginning to come into existence. I just wasn't sold on the idea of putting her over there in Greenwood. He said, "Well, they don't have any choice lots left out there in Oakwood." I said, "Well, I'd like to see." At that time most of the lots out here were being cared for by big families, and they were taking good care. I saw where she's buried down there, it looked pretty good to me, and so we bought it and we buried her there. But as time went on the children, heirs of the original people that are buried there, died or went off and had no endowment. In those days, they used wooden boxes just to cover the casket, and they rotted out, so the graves were all sunk in. So, you might say I just couldn't stand not to do something about it. I went to work trying to, you might say, horn in and get something started, and several people said, "You can't do it." I said, "Well, why can't I do it?" They said, "If you were some big shot you might do it, but you'll never get it done." But, we have done a whole lot. Haven't done what we ought to and what the town should have done, but we've done a whole lot, and we're getting quite a few burials here now.

The Chapel was built in 1912. Most of the funerals of that time were conducted from the residences of the people that died. It was customary in those days to keep the body at home and neighbors and friends would sit up all night with it. I sat up with numbers of them myself, drank coffee and probably had some discussions that were unbecoming to sitting up, you know. Well, anyway, that was the way it was taken care of, and we had no automobiles; we had hacks. All the undertakers had hacks, the livery stables all had hacks. There were no dams on this river at that time, and at certain times of the year the water would stand in holes, and you could drive across with a team or a horse and buggy. When I was a small boy my father was a salesman for the Bewley Mills, and there were a few stores over here on the North Side--Burine was the name of it. A Marine

I happened to be riding with him one day in his buggy when he came over here to take some orders. He drove down in the river and let the horses drink out of the river. At that time we had a wire bridge across the river there and you'd come down Florence Street and turn across the river on that wire bridge and immediately after you crossed that, the road would turn abruptly to your left and come parallel to the river right up that street there: that was the county road. We had lots of sickness; doctors knew very little; the span of life was around 50 years. You would take tuberculosis, typhoid fever, diphtheria, pneumonia, smallpox, and lots more diseases. They couldn't control them. We had lots of paupers in those days. We have, I expect maybe all told, 1200 pauper graves out here. It was in those days either work or starve. People helped each other.

Of course, we had lots of bad men buried out here. I hate to say it, but we

more of the people visit the graves of these bad men than we knew the others. These western writers would come out and want to see Long Hair Jim Cartwright's grave, Luke Short that killed him, Jim Miller that we lynched in Oklahoma--he was a professional killer, a paid killer. Lot of people around here thought it was all right to kill a bad man. Since this man had just killed two men they didn't ask whether it was legal or not, they just wanted to kill him. It's debatable as to which one of them killed him, but Denny Lord claims to have killed him; Ben Eudale was supposed to have maybe killed him. But before they killed him Jim Maddox, the Police Chief, walked into the lumber yard and said, "Bill, I'm unarmed, throw down your gun and come to me and I'll see that you get a fair trial." Well, Jim Maddox told me this. He said that Bill did that, and when he got out there in the middle of would-be gunmen killed him right out there in the middle of the street, and I know if it had been now, this day or night, I would have been there because he was infuriated, he felt like he had to do something. The District Attorney confronted him with a mob of about 20 men, and he had used two of his bullets in killing those men, and he wouldn't hope to get out alive. John Deam, the grocery store, this is what he bears it out. He was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- just a young man like 21 or 22, and he better get out of here, you can't beat it. Bill got killed, he bought a lot right over a grocery store. He was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- he had Bill buried in it. This is what he bears it out. He was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- in China for 50 years. He was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- over in Weatherford at that time, and he was better off than anything-- caused Bill to get off, but he was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- been no trouble for him to prove that he was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- the least. Now I didn't use a very good gun, and he was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- here and wanted some information. I gave him my opinion, and he was in this man's gambling den, and he was better off than anything-- says, "There's one thing for sure--Bill was in the wrong place when he got killed."

*Bill Tomlinson  
Shot  
DA Jeff McLean  
Hamil P Scott  
He was shot in Roe's Lumber  
yard  
6th & Throck  
main*

We've had lots of gamblers here, and they would go broke like most gamblers. My father being in politics and wanting the good will of all classes of people, and wanting to be elected when he ran, he cultivated the friendship of all classes of people. He often loaned them money when they were broke. He told me, "If you were going to make a loan with no security, a gambler would be the best man to loan to. They would win, be back, and pay you because they knew they were going to be broke again." There was a young fellow named Floyd Fox driving a money wagon for Wells Fargo Express. He would gamble and, of course, lose. Father got to loaning him money. The last time he borrowed money he didn't pay it back--he ran off. Well, many years later my father was standing in the old State National Bank when a fellow came walking up to him. My father didn't recognize him. He said, "Mr. Winston, I did you an injustice once, and I want to correct it." My father looked at him and said, "Friend, I don't know you." "Well", he said, "you remember Floyd Fox." "Yes." "Well, I want to pay you, I want to know what the interest on it is." My father said,

"There'll be no interest. If you want to pay the original amount, all right", and he paid it. But that is sort of the way people operated in those days. They'd call on their friends when they were in trouble and most of them would eventually make the money and pay it back.

They helped each other. These doctors amuse me. If you're not sick enough to go to the hospital, you don't need them. It used to be that most of the practice doctors had, they had to go to the sick patients. It was all on credit, you know. All these early day doctors had a collector. So much that went on those days--you'd have to know the real conditions that existed in order to believe that this happened. I had a brother that was born with bad eyesight, and when he was about six years old they brought him in to have his eyes operated on. It was snowing--he could tell it was snowing, he could see through the window. I don't mean to be unfair to the doctor that did it, I'm sure he acted in good faith, but old Dr. Bell who was the father of these Bells who had the clinic down here, he operated on my brother's eyes, and he could never see anything any more. Well, he had a young doctor specialist by the name of Gray that had just come to Fort Worth at that time, and he was present at that operation. Years after, I happened to be talking to Dr. Gray, and he remarked, that it was a crime, a sin, knowing no more about eyes than a man did, to let him even touch or cut into those eyes. That's the way they learned. So you can see that things were hard work; pioneers didn't have it easy.

Water was bad. My father, when he first came out here, took typhoid fever; went home on the train sick as a horse. He said, "I was so sick I didn't care whether I lived or died." Consumption, or tuberculosis--four of our family died of tuberculosis. They didn't know how to treat it. They didn't know how you really got it. There's a grave down there on my grandparents' lot--one of their neighbors were from Kentucky, had tuberculosis, so he came out here. People used to think if you went to a dry climate you might recover. He came out here, but he died and is buried down there on that plot. My grandfather on my mother's side died of tuberculosis and two of my father's brothers and two of my aunts had it. One of them was buried up near Springtown in 1886, just a young woman of 20 years old. A lot of the babies died too.

A doctor didn't have to have a license to practice medicine in those days. There were lots of doctors practicing medicine with no license. You might say just trial and error, and gradually picked it up. Now that is verified in Dr. Van Zandt's book that I read. He told about doctors, how little education they had, no anesthetics. I was back in Kentucky and one of the in-laws told about her father being in the Confederate Army and getting his arm shot off. The only treatment they had was to put enough men around him to hold him and cut it off. But he lived, and he could get back home. A lot of them didn't.

My immediate family were not in the Civil War. My daughter decided she wanted to join the DAR, and she found out that she was eligible through the Winston side or through the grandmother's side, and some of them were in there. The Winstons settled in Virginia and the Kimbrews were in Virginia--some of them went to Georgia, Texas, and on out to California. My grandparents on my father's side settled in White Settlement in 1877. And the Frazers--I really



don't know when my grandfather came to Texas, but he was here during the War Between the States and was District Judge there and died with TB in 1870. Now I didn't know what year he died, but some of the kinfolks said he was a Mason, so I got in contact with the Lodge here, told them what I wanted, and they told me if I would write to the Grand Lodge at Waco that they would give me that information. I did, and they wrote me a letter telling me when he died, and that he was a Mason.

I had four brothers, but one of them died. He was a teacher. He was sort of like I was--he'd done a lot of things, but he was a graduate of Baylor University, then went to teach school in Vernon. While he was there he met the girl that he married, settled there, and went into business. So at the time he died about four years ago, he was Mayor of Vernon. Some of the people sent me a clipping out of the newspaper with his picture in it; said he was a youthful 78 and was wondering why he would want to be Mayor and get into politics at that age. When I went up to his funeral, the preacher was talking about him, and he says, "I never could quite understand Winston. He looked like he never did want to slow down. He just kept pushing ahead. They had the city police force as pallbearers. He had been to Wichita Falls on city business and came home that night--he'd been having trouble with his heart. His wife went out of the room for something and when she came back in the room, he was laying on the floor--he died instantly. That's the way I want to go.

My brother that was blind is buried here. My father left him plenty to take care of him. He married and had no children. He and his wife are buried in Greenwood.

I have another brother died out at Snyder, Texas. I had one sister--one of the most sacrificial, kind-hearted women I ever knew. She married a Baptist preacher by the name of Albertson. She taught school at Howard Payne College, and that's where she met him. Then he went out on the field and his health gave way. She came back and taught about 12 years more until she retired. She lived to be 86.

I have a daughter, Mary Louise Winston, who is a teacher at Wedgwood Middle School. She's a hard worker. She goes before school hours and stays until after. She has charge of the music, the band and the orchestra. She's beginning to talk about retiring. She's 58 but, of course you know, the longer you stay on the more salary you'll get on retirement.

There was one Winston back there that had 50 slaves; they all came from Virginia. The two younger children were university graduates. I wanted to be a West Texas cowboy and couldn't resist the temptation to quit school.

Mr. Winston, why don't you tell us about this mill you mentioned.

This mill was right on top of the bluff about 400 feet east of the bridge. Mr. Mark Evans owned the mill and about the time I was 7 or 8 years old he closed it down and moved the equipment down to Old Mexico. Mr. Bewley first operated a mill at Weatherford. At one time Weatherford was a little larger than Fort Worth due to the fact that it had plenty of timber, sandy land, and shallow wells for water. As far as the farmers went, that land was easier to cultivate. The black land of Fort Worth was shunned by people coming in because it was sticky and wouldn't shed and was much harder to cultivate. That is the reason that towns like Azle and other sandy land communities were before us. They needed that timber for even rail fences. When the T & P Railroad started west, they had picked Weatherford for their division station but the powers that were over there refused to cooperate like the railway finance heads wanted so they put up their division point in Fort Worth. You take Fort Worth...we had a wholesale groceryman by the name of Joe Brown. At that time, being terminus for the railroad was a big part of the freight line. Groceries, supplies and all were unloaded in Fort Worth and taken horsedrawn to all parts of West Texas and you probably have read about Steele's Tavern which was located where the Criminal Court Building is now. One of my father's first cousins, Lulie Winston, married a son of Larry Steele who was operator of that tavern.

Fort Worth really began right there on that hill. One of Fort Worth's first pioneers was a man by the name of Farmer that was living in a tent. From what I read and have been told by my ancestors and old time people who lived here, the Trinity River up through there (pointing east) was a very fertile valley. Lots of people came in here with their slaves and were raising cotton and had a profitable agriculture going and that condition existed until the War Between the States. Then the Negroes were all freed and development stopped. It broke most of them. One man I knew about and knew his descendants didn't have so much land but was a slave trader. That was his business. Of course, after the slaves were freed, he was financially hurt.

Getting back to Fort Worth, the water was bad here. Lots of typhoid fever and tuberculosis. People used to think if you got here to a drier climate and maybe you'd get well. Of course, that wasn't true but there was any number of sicknesses. People didn't live long. The doctors knew very little. It was possible for doctors to practice without a license. So many diseases they knew nothing about. Now I had an older brother born with defective eyesight. The day he was operated on here in Fort Worth, it was snowing. He could see that snow. Now that doctor that operated on him was old Dr. Bell, the father of these other Bells who came on and have since died. Later on we had a doctor who came in here as an eye specialist, a Dr. Gray, and he and Graham Thompson were the leading eye doctors here in Fort Worth for a long time. He told me he was present as a young man when old Dr. Bell operated on my brother. He remarked to me, "He didn't have any qualifications whatever to cut into that boy's eyes and operate on him." That's how most doctors learned...going ahead and experimenting.

It was common for them to read medicine in so and so's office. The same way we got our lawyers. Most everyone here was from somewhere else. There were very few natives. Jobs were hard to get. It wasn't "What do you pay?" but "Will you give me a job?" It was rather common that if you died, the neighbors had to make up money to bury you with. I remember the first time as a small boy in 1898 that I was ever out here. It was to a funeral service of one of our neighbors who had been sick a long time. The neighbors all made up money and buried him. He left a good sized family. His wife started taking in boarders. The children had good minds and in the long run they turned out to be useful citizens. After I came out here, I talked to one of his daughters, saying I was trying to clean this place up and make it look respectable and she asked me to find her father's grave, never having been out here. I located his grave. She came out. She married an electrician who prospered so she was financially easy. She endowed his plot and bought a nice marker to put on his grave. We are having quite a few people put down markers on graves.

In those days, when I was a young man, the only water that was fit to drink was from water men who hauled immense barrels. They would buy water from a deep well. They'd drive up there and fill your barrel from a long hose on the water wagon. Your barrel was located by the fence. Lots of times when cattle were coming through Fort Worth, they would turn over the water barrel if you didn't have a fence. W. J. Gilvin had three water wagons. He later became city tax collector. After that, he was one of the street commissioners. One of the stained glass windows in the chapel was for his son who was killed in a railroad accident in about 1898. Another water man was Dave Reaves. A family by the name of Pollack operated some as well as a man by the name of Fleming. That was good artesian water.

In those days they had no inspection of milk or cows either. They would have ten gallon cans in front of the wagon. The lid would sink so you had a container there. You would put your pitcher out on your porch. The dairyman would come along and with a long handled dipper he would dip the milk into the lid and then pour it into your pitcher on the porch. Of course, that was very unsanitary but anyway, that was the way it was.

In those days meat markets were separate from groceries. There was no inspection on meat. We had what you would call wholesale butchers. They'd butcher a cow and throw it into what we called a buckboard (instead of a spring wagon, it was without springs to it) and they'd throw a sheet over that beef and drive around to different markets and whoever wanted to buy it, bought it. There was no inspection. You had no idea of the conditions under which that animal was slaughtered. That wasn't conducive to good health. We had another dairy here, Shaw Brothers., that got to be immense, having 400 cows they were milking. About that time they began testing cattle for tuberculosis. They discovered the herd was almost completely infested with TB. The result was they dispersed the herd. We milked lots of big Durham cows then.

When they started marketing these cows, so many of them began to react that the packers wouldn't buy any of them branded "SB" unless they were subject to the tubercular test. I happened to be trading in cattle along about 1912. I bought a bunch of those big, stout, fine cattle...and I got them over to the stockyards. That herd of cattle was so well known with SB on them that a big group of commission men followed us up to the pen, just seeing if I would get those cattle sold without being subject to inspection. I didn't succeed. The result was I brought most of those cattle back to the pasture. I sold a few to dairies but eventually they were condemned. That gives you an idea of how unprotected people were in the food they bought.

They didn't have adequate sewages in those days. The bigger part of town had outdoor privies. They appointed what we called a scavenger. He would make weekly or every two week rounds and clean up that place, putting a bunch of lime out. A world of flies were created from that type of sanitation. When you stop to think about the hardships people used to overcome and put up with it's unbelievable to the present generation that such conditions existed. The flies would multiply and every grocery store in those days sold fly paper and flies would stick to it. You never hear of fly paper any more. We used to have threshing machines in the county we called "dependent" where you had to feed the crew while they were threshing for you. It was very common to see them come in for the noon meal to a long table with a long pole suspended above it that was draped with newspapers. One of the children would keep that moving to keep flies scattered off the table.

People used to have something setting in the window; perhaps a damp cloth hung; the wind would blow through it and feel cool. Other people would suspend food in the well to keep it fresh.

My father was a Kentuckian. In visiting back there years ago, they told me they got their ice when the pond was frozen over deep, block it, and bring it to the ice house. They didn't pay any attention to germs. After they began manufacturing ice, the ice wagons would take it door to door. The kids always loved to eat the splinters the ice pick made in the ice. The Southern Cold Storage, owned by John P. King, used to be a big ice plant. He later owned King Candy Company. They had a printer print books of coupons like we have nowadays. That printer made a mistake in the printing so he threw them in the wastebasket. In those days, people owning low-lying lots allowed livery stables to dump trash there to fill them up. The printer dumped these coupons and I happened to pick up some of them. We didn't try to pass them off for ice, but one of Mr. King's brothers, Henry, came to me to get hold of them to stop people from using them. There were no restrictions on where or what you could dump.

How did Mr. King get started from ice to candy?

That brings up something else. John P. King's father was a farmer over on Village Creek. That's in the edge of the timber. He had a big family. John P. King got a job clerking here in Fort Worth in a dry goods store. He got acquainted with everybody. Then he ran for County Clerk and was elected.



He was a very popular office holder and saved his money. When he did finally go out of the office there was a Southern Cold Storage plant over there and I'm not familiar with who originally built it but he and some of his friends bought the plant. They drifted into the produce business. As time went on he was very energetic and put in the candy business, quitting the produce business. He also quit the ice business. Most of us now days know that the candy business grew to be a big business. He died while he was living at the Fort Worth Club. He had two boys. They are both dead now. They sold that plant for an immense sum of money. He and his brother, Henry, developed the Monticello Addition. They also developed the Riverside area. He was, I think, a director in a bank at one time. In that same connection, in that part of the country, the Hanger family, W. A. Hanger, they are prominent lawyers. He came out of that community; self educated. The Curtis family were all raised in that area. There was the Loving family, too. I didn't know anything about that branch of the Lovings but they had three daughters that were considered very beautiful women. One of them married a man by the name of Turner and she later became Post-Mistress of Fort Worth and was very active in promoting cultural things. Another daughter married the first man to bring telegraph operating into Fort Worth. Another one married the lawyer, Frank Ball and they are all buried over there in one spot. One of these stained glass windows was dedicated to Mrs. Loving who was the Mother of those ladies.

When you had a fire in those days you could figure that you would lose your house, couldn't you?

We had a volunteer fire department. I used to get a big kick out of watching the horse-drawn fire trucks racing to try to put out a fire. We were in business out on what is now Vickery Blvd. It used to be called Railroad Avenue. I think there was about 21 blocks of Fort Worth burned up. If it had not been for the T & P Railroad reservation there is no telling how much of Fort Worth would have burned up. I was sitting in the door of our place of business and I saw the railroad switch engine had a couple of box cars attached. The wind was blowing and ignited the box cars. They were pulling them out to where they could burn up without spreading the fire. One of those fire trucks went turning the corner racing to the fire, one of the horses fell and the fire truck rolled up on his hip and just slashed a big gash and they had to call the vet and shoot him. There wasn't any chance for him to live. One man was burned up in that fire. The whole 21 blocks was leveled to the ground.

Was that when the old Jennings Bridge was destroyed?

I don't remember that it was destroyed there but it burned up to Vickery Blvd. The T & P shops roundhouse and all was located on the corner of South Main and Railroad Avenue was what they called it before, it was later named Vickery. They got that name from the railroad that was built from Fort Worth to Brownwood. At that time the T & P Railroad owned a lot of land there that wasn't covered by tracks or anything and all of the circuses that came to Fort Worth had lots of room and they put their tents there. Now there is no place around Fort Worth for a big tent show to hold it. You know they put them in the Coliseum.



Was there a circus grounds or race track behind where Montgomery Ward is now located?

Yes, and I had lots of fun out there. They had a race track and had race meets. They had a big bunch of stables. Before we had automobiles here everybody had a good horse; everybody wanted a faster horse than his neighbor. We had what they called matinee races. I was down there at the last meeting they had. We were all betting on the races. I went down there a lot. I read the Harness Horse National Publication and was so fond of horses that I had a better knowledge of these race meets and circuits. Having read how these horses were winning or losing, who was a good rider and who wasn't, and also the breeding of them, I had more knowledge than these city people that were just out for a little sport and didn't have that advantage. There was a fellow and his wife from Kentucky here who were sitting next to me. Most Kentuckians thought they knew all about horses. As those races would come up I got to betting with him. I was winning every bet. I saw his wife was getting peeved of him doing that but he kept insisting and I kept betting with him. The sheriff was sitting down there doing the same thing. At the last race, I told that fellow "I bet you that I can pick the tail end of the race, the last horse." Well, I knew a trainer down there that had this old horse and he was fast in stride but you couldn't always keep him on the gate. He would break and usually come in last. Sure enough he did just what I thought he was going to do! After that they had motorcycle races on the same day. As the motorcycles came around one of them went down. The one following him hit him-and he went down. One of them was killed. I think it was a good thing for the country that they stopped horse racing. Nevertheless, I enjoyed it while it was going on. That was about 1915.

Who owned these grounds?

R. G. Johnson, a pioneer lawyer, owned the grounds. He bought it cheap, realizing that Fort Worth would develop. He owned it and leased it for a small sum of money to this association to conduct these races.

There was another race track right down here by the Fort Worth Power and Light Company between North Main and the river where there was a big flat. When I was a small kid I'd ride my pony over there and watch the Dallas people bring their horses over here. The Fort Worth people and they would have a matinee race. Of course, some of those old horse players had their stables there for training horses. They'd use that track. There was also a race track on Hemphill Street. It was right on Hemphill parallel on the west side. They built four or five big horse barns there. One of these trainers from Oklahoma would come there in the winter and train the horses. There was a race track over by the Denver Railroad and back in the river bottom land. It was just after you got out of Fort Worth by Stop Six; there was a big barn there that belonged to the Ayres and one of those Ayres studied law and got to be a prominent lawyer here in Fort Worth. Ben Ayres was his name. That Ayres property is covered up with houses now.

Do you remember when the stock shows started having their big to-do?

I remember part of that. I am told that they had it under some trees on the North Side. I guess about the time I was born they organized the packing plant over in North Side. They had the stock yards there. At times the packing plant did not prosper. Swift and Armour were the ones that really made the packing business in Fort Worth. All the way from an addition on the South Side into where the Masonic Temple is was the way they drove their cattle in. It was almost all prairie. From what is now known as Lancaster to Texas Street was a ravine where kids used to have a ball field. There was a spring coming out there. I've been there and drunk many times from that spring. We didn't know there were germs. The cattle would come through there and come down through Florance Street and then on to the wire bridge. The land between the bridge and the bluff was grown over with weeds. That was a headache to those cattle men because the cattle would smell the water and they had a lot of trouble keeping them in a bunch and keeping them from going over the bridge and getting in the water. The wire bridge was suspended by great big coils of wire, not just one cable. Those wires were in there and some way clamped. There are still some of the corner posts down there now right where the clear fork and the west fork of the Trinity River come together. You know, there used to be lots of open land and the lanes had lots of grass; people used to drive cattle long distances to the railroads. The last big herd of cattle moved overland (900 head) came down that trail I'm talking about. I didn't know how many there were but in later years I got acquainted with some of those trailers, old men that had helped move those cattle through. They told me how many there were, where they originated from, and how the stock yards over there were--not like it is now. It's all shrunk up. It wasn't an easy job, riding trail.

My father bought 40 acres of land out of the 2500 block of Hemphill Street. There was so much open free grass around Fort Worth. Family times were hard, There were families that had a lot of boys; they developed the idea of gathering the town cows (nearly everybody had a milk cow) and take them out to graze. They would drive those cattle slowly, not try to rush them, just let them graze. When they got out there by the Ryan Addition where they ran into fences, they would come around and drift back. Over there west of Eighth Avenue there was an addition called Mistletoe Heights. There was one big nice house back in there that a family of people got permission to live in. They put up some temporary fences. These extended back to the river. After the morning got hot they would bring the cattle back and turn them in there. In the evening they would round them up and take them home where they belonged. I had a pony and got a kick out of riding and herding with them. Those people were kind of horse traders and they would buy wild horses and break them. The light of my life was to ride a bronc. Later on the people, who were pioneers, left here and went to Montana. When they left, a noted old time cow thief moved in there. Things began to come alive and some people wanted to buy Mistletoe Heights. To get title to it, they had to hunt these people up that had had possession of it for years and had gone to Montana.

We had lots of tick fever. Cattle that were raised in a tick pasture developed an immunity to the fever. The town cows would get out there and get the ticks and a lot of them would die.

One of our family's friends raised a heifer calf about a year old. Unsuspecting, they wanted to put her out on the pasture and hired me to take her out to this family by the name of Platt that was out there on the Mistletoe property. I didn't know or realize why but she very probably got ticks on her and died. Most of them died because they didn't know any way to treat them.

Way back in the 90's, all the stores on Main Street used to have a big porch standing out over the sidewalk. They got up to date. There was one street (either Main or Houston) paved with bois d'arc blocks; they decided to take it up and the people wanted to buy those blocks for wood. I bought some of those blocks for fire wood. Things are so different here now.

The river used to get out from up there about the court house and would extend clear on over past where the Ellis Pecan Company is now. There used to be a Ku Klux Klan hall there. Mrs. Donahugh and her mother had walked down there to see the high water by standing on the bluff; it gave way and the mother drowned right there in the river. You wouldn't believe that civilized people in as far away from the war between the states could be assembled and sold on the idea of taking the government in their own hands through the Ku Klux Klan. As I understand it, it was a very necessary thing in the South, in the early days to protect themselves from the injustices of the Northern people. It started in Georgia. It got to where if you wanted to run for public office you had to be a member of the Klan. It didn't last long. If a fellow wasn't suiting or if he had a bad character, why, they would kidnap him and take him out and whip him or tar him up. They would come into your church during the service with sheets on them and usually give the paster a bunch of money. I know what really ruined it was what worked the people up. The injustice of it; anybody that had the price was a member. It was just ridiculous. Nearly all the preachers in town were members of it. I know one mighty good man that was running for office; he wouldn't join it and he didn't get anywhere. They had a meeting and decided who they wanted in office and put in a young fellow who didn't have any qualifications but he got elected.

My father had 365 acres in that track of land on the South Side. He gave 30 dollars an acre for it. At that time Fort Worth was growing. The doctor's seminary was located in Baylor University. They decided that they wanted to build a religious school. When he and a lot of other land speculators heard about it, they put on a campaign to raise money and get donations of land to induce the Board that had charge of the location to settle on that place. I know that there was a lot of rivalry going on. My father was able to get up the most land donated so they decided to build out there. He gave them 30 acres. Later on the same people that tried to get that deal had some property over there by T.C.U. is now located. T.C.U. was then in Waco, just a small school that wasn't doing any good; they decided to come to Fort Worth. He headed some people who were successful in getting them located on their property. When T.C.U. was first in Fort Worth they rented them some big brick buildings on Weatherford and Rusk (now Commerce) to hold their school in until they could get their buildings built. T.C.U. has had a rapid growth. Amon Carter was raised at Bowie; and as the passenger

trains would stop, he would sell sandwiches. Somewhere or other he got into the newspaper business and came to Fort Worth. He and another man formed what was called the Star and we had the Telegram then owned by C. D. Rymass. After Carter bought the Telegram they continued on in partnership. I don't know just when the other man sold his interest to Mr. Carter but Mr. Carter developed that paper into the wonderful and very profitable paper it is today. He was born with good luck and a nose for knowing a bargain. He gave several million dollars to T.C.U.

Due to the fact that you have such an interest in the Oakwood Cemetary and have given so much of yourself toward it's growth and development, why don't you tell us a little bit about your dream of utilizing the area.

We had a board meeting here yesterday. I have been so lucky in getting help from the county commissioner and the city. They wanted to know how I did it. I told them it was just telling them the plain facts about these older people of being so deserving and of the hardships they had. I think any sensible person wouldn't object to the county and the city helping make this area respectable. In San Antonio down on the river that runs through the town those boat rides out there and those resturants and all are very nice. That part of the beginnings of Fort Worth is just dregs. Now it's dangerous to walk on the streets up there at night; it seems to be an effort on the part of a lot of people to tear those old buildings down and bring buildings in there and do things to bring people back down town spending money. I believe that it would be a success for people to ride in boats. I know that people like to stroll through cemeteries, especially old cemeteries, and look at all the different types of monuments, dates of death and get the history, who they were and where they came from and how they got here. In my judgement it's just a question of them having foresight enough to put a little port down there where we touch the river and let the people have tours. The schools could charter a bus and let the children loose down there and they will talk, look, and see every thing. It could also be a summer attraction.

Why couldn't it be developed to have walk ways up to the hill? The cemetary presents a park--like atmosphere. The children might like to have the story about the irony Luke Short and Cartwright. They would like to think about the shoot-em-up. The older people would like to know more about the irony of they're being buried near to each other. Do you know why they were buried so close together?

They were buried close together by accident. Old man George Royals was the undertaker here. My father told me that old man George always liked to gamble and play poker and all that. These gambling houses used to stay open all night. I've heard in a round about way that old man George said that Luke Short was just a big time gambler in town to town, that he was kind of a big hearted fellow in his way. Somebody had a child that died and I believe he bought that flat over there for that child to be buried on. About six years after he killed Cartwright, he died so they buried him over there, too. In reading history and talking to people that he knew, he was just bad. Both of those men were bad; they were killers and gamblers. They tell me that what caused Luke Short to kill Cartwright was that Cartwright was asking too much kick-back while he was constable.



We had a man named Short come out here for a day and a half walking through here claiming he was trying to rake up some kinship.

Do you have a complete record of all the burials you have here?

Nearly complete. Vandals broke into the building and took the information wheel. A big ledger is in our safe. Frequently people come out here and go through it. It is a little bit of a task to answer all these people that want to know about kin folk, especially if they don't know for sure that they are here. Mrs. Tennison will get that ledger and exhaust our efforts. Frequently we can find what they want.

Haven't all the names in that old ledger been transferred into this file?

People that just have one space are not in there. We have a pauper buried down here. They could only locate one sister. She said, "I don't owe him anything; do anything you want." Nobody came out to the service but about the time it was winding up, a car came driving up way down there and it was that sister. The other day she came in here and brought a brother to that man that was from out of town and they wanted to go down there to his grave. I took them down there to the grave and she said that wasn't where he was. Well, I thought maybe she was right. "Well, I'm going to have him moved from here." she said. If we insist that he was buried right here and she takes him up and it is not him we are in trouble there and so I told her that we buried that man where we were told to bury him and he is there and that is as far as we are going to assume any obligation. We don't have a perfect record of every burial. Our records are not detailed. They tell date of death, mostly. We used to keep all that but now the Bureau of Vital Statistics keeps that. We have to mail in the information.

What did you do when you used those crypts they had years ago, when bodies were brought in from out of town? Did you make a record of that in the ledger?

I don't know. You know they didn't used to do that all the time. Everybody wasn't embalmed. There was a body shipped in here from New Mexico that undoubtedly wasn't embalmed. That was before my day but they put it in one of those crypts. The people that were here at that time told me it was the rainy season; they dug the grave and said that body was in a bad state of decomposition.

The women in construction are going to sand-blast the roof of the chapel and paint it. They tell me that mildew is from a germ so you have to wait until it's real dry to sand-blast it and paint it. They want to sand-blast those walls and finish landscaping it.

Is there any plan to fix the Memorial Fountain for Dr. Burts that his widow erected?

Nobody has decided to put water flowing through it again. I'll tell you a man that really deserves recognition. You have probably heard of him. We had a Wonder Spring Palace here. A whole bunch of babies were being taken care of by a nurse when that thing caught on fire. It burned very fast but a man by the name of Haynes saved several people. He is buried here.

I would be so happy to have people see the view from here to down town. I think they would see things that they never dreamed of. If we don't look and meditate over things, you over look a lot of things that you wish you hadn't.

There was an old flour mill on the bluff in early days. It was an old steam boiler probably fired with wood in those days.

What did they do at this mill?

My recollection is from hear-say that Mr. Dooley dis-mantled the mill and moved it to Mexico.

We had a Randal's water mill over east years ago, too.

Did you know any of the people that had those big houses along Samuel Avenue?

I knew all of them. That was a very nice part of town. The Samuel's family were all raised over there. Holliway---now there is a name that I never see mentioned anymore. One of Holliway's daughters married a man who had the biggest grocery in Fort Worth.

There used to be that wholesale grocery--Joe Vane. There was a fellow by the name of Jake Johnson who was a salesman, the kind of a man to handle those traders. He turned out to be one of the biggest cattle men in Fort Worth. Jake Johnson is buried out here. He and Luke Short were partners at one time. Cartwright was arrested and put in jail. He had been indicted for some murders up in Nevada and they came down here to get Cartwright. The sheriff hid him by taking him out of town; he put him on a train so that they couldn't get him.

Joseph Kimbrough Winston, father of our interviewee, was born in Logan Co. Kentucky in 1854 to Joseph K and H. O. (Trabue) Winston, natives of Kentucky. Their families had been active in founding Kentucky as a state. Mr. Winston came to Fort Worth in 1877 when twenty three years of age where he sold cattle and land for a time before he became interested in the fuel and grain business. He was a Democrat and was County Tax Collector of Tarrant County for four years. Later he was a member of the Board of Education in Fort Worth. It was through his efforts (and a gift of thirty acres of land) that the Southwestern Baptist Theological Seminary was located in Fort Worth. He was Secretary of the Board of Trustees. Miss Lily Frazer, daughter of Judge Charles A. Frazer became his bride. Their five children were: Paul F., Thomas L., Joseph K., Jr., Helen F., and Alexander Winston.