

George V. Schmidt

interviewed by

Mrs. W.A. Schmidt

March 2, 1975

Ruby Schmidt Collection of Bicentennial Interviews

ORAL HISTORIES OF FORT WORTH, INC.

04 5.  
What is your name?

GEORGE SCHMIDT.

And where were you born?

FORT WORTH.

And what was the date?

APRIL 27, 1893.

Who were your parents?

MR. AND MRS. C. W. SCHMIDT

What was your mother's maiden name?

MINNA HEGMANN

And were they married in Fort Worth?

NO, MARRIED IN GALVESTON IN 1879.

I take it then that they moved up here prior to your birth. Do you have other brothers and sisters who were born in Galveston?

HAD ONE BROTHER BORN IN GALVESTON.

What caused them to decide to move to Fort Worth?

OH, I CAN'T SAY.

And what did your father do?

OH, HE HAD A DAIRY FOR A WHILE, DID SOME CARPENTER WORK, AND THAT'S ABOUT IT.

Where did you all live in Fort Worth?

DIDN'T HAVE ANY NAMES FOR STREETS IN THOSE DAYS - LIVED IN RIVERSIDE. FIRST, WE LIVED SOMEWHERE ON RUSK STREET; LATER CHANGED TO COMMERCE ST. BOAZ ST. WHICH IS NOW SAMUELS AVENUE.

How long did you live there? Do you know?

WELL, IT WAS BEFORE MY TIME.

Where were you born?

ON EAST FIRST STREET - WHAT'S NOW HALTOM ROAD IN RIVERSIDE.

I know that later your parents did build a house out in Birdville. Like to know a little bit about this land and its location.

WELL, MY FATHER BOUGHT THREE ACRES OF LAND - WHAT'S NOW ON CORNER OF EAST BELKNAP AND HALTOM ROAD.

There's an interesting story that you told me about the erection of this house. Will you share that with me please?

MY FATHER BOUGHT THE OLD CAR BARNs - ONE OR TWO - THE STREET CARS USED TO RUN FROM LAKE COMO TO RIVERSIDE AND THEY OPERATED FOR SOME TEN YEARS AND WHEN THEY WENT OUT OF BUSINESS, MY FATHER BOUGHT THE OLD CAR BARNs AND BUILT A HOUSE OUT ON EAST BELKNAP - A TWO-STORY HOUSE.

Tell me something about your childhood days out there. You've told me some interesting stories about the games you all used to play and the people you used to see passing by - who were some of the people you used to see that passed back and forth going back to town? Did you say some of the Parkers passed?

YES, SOME OF THE PARKERS - ~~W~~UANAHA PARKER FAMILY.

What about the later years when you and one of your brothers - I don't recall which one - that were working at a grocery store. The prices of some of the foods?

MY BROTHER - WHEN I WAS 16 YEARS OLD, MY BROTHER AND I OWNED AND OPERATED A SMALL MEAT MARKET. AND WE SOLD STEAK AT 15¢ A POUND.

And where was this located?

RIVERSIDE - WHAT'S NOW EAST FIRST STREET.

How come you all at such a tender age decided to go into business for yourselves? Was it that the opportunity presented itself or did you all just look for business, or what?

WELL, WE JUST - A MAN GOING OUT OF BUSINESS AND WE RENTED THIS PLACE. WE ONLY OPERATED IT FOR ABOUT SIX OR EIGHT MONTHS, AND THE REASON WHY WE WASN'T MAKING ANY MONEY SO WE QUIT.

AT 15¢ a pound for steak, I agree. Is that all you sold - just meat?

WELL, A FEW GROCERIES.

Did you deliver?

YES.

What kind of vehicle did you have for delivery?

OH, A ONE-HORSE WAGON.

HAD SOME CUSTOMERS THAT HAD A STANDING ORDER OF 5¢ WORTH OF STEAK EVERY DAY. SEVERAL CUSTOMERS LIKE THAT.

You told me a story about in your younger years that I thought might be interesting - something about when you all used to go out to Randol Mill and have the grain ground and how it was an all-day affair.

WELL, I REMEMBER GOING OUT WITH MY FATHER TO RANDOL MILL - WHICH WAS ABOUT TEN MILES FROM OUR PLACE AND CARRIED CORN OUT THERE AND MADE CHOPS OUT OF IT - IF YOU KNOW WHAT CHOPS IS - HORSE FEED. WE'D GO OUT THERE EARLY OF A MORNING ABOUT 5:00. THE DAM WAS ACROSS THE RIVER. HAD A BIG WHEEL. OF COURSE, PART OF THE DAM IS SUPPOSED TO STILL BE OUT THERE. THEY DIDN'T HAVE A DAM LIKE LAKE WORTH. THE OLD MILL WAS JUST - - -

You decided that you wanted to be a businessman - and how did you go about deciding what you would be and how would you get the experience for being a businessman?

WELL, WHEN I WAS 16 or 17 YEARS OLD, I WORKED IN A PLUMBING SHOP.

What was the name of this shop?

GARRISON. FEBRUARY 20, 1910. THAT'S WHEN I TOOK MY FIRST JOB AND I WORKED FOR HIM 12 YEARS AND VARIOUS PLUMBING SHOPS AND FINALLY IN 1926-25, I WENT IN BUSINESS FOR MYSELF. I HAD A PARTNER BUT I SOON GOT AWAY FROM HIM AFTER TWO YEARS.

Where was your business located?

11th AND THROCKMORTON.

Now you all didn't have the mode of transportation like you do nowadays. So, tell me - how did you get to the different jobs?

WELL, WE HAD AUTOMOBILES - TRUCKS, BUT BEFORE THAT, IT WAS

HORSE AND BUGGY. WHEN I FIRST WENT TO WORK WITH THE OTHER MAN, THEN I DROVE A HORSE AND WAGON.

And how did you dress for your work?

STRIPED OVERALLS. YOU DON'T SEE THEM ANY MORE.

I think that's interesting. When was it that you wore a tie to work?

ALWAYS WORE A TIE GOING TO AND FROM WORK AND AT HOME I CHANGED CLOTHES TO WORK IN AT THE SHOP.

I've heard several people say that they recollect the old wooden viaduct over the Jennings Avenue. You remember that, I suppose?

YES, I DO. DROVE A HORSE OVER IT MANY TIMES.

Was that southside fire that destroyed so many homes within your period of remembering?

YES, THAT WAS IN 1908. NO, 1909. ABOUT MARCH - APRIL.

How did it start?

SOME BOYS PLAYING WITH MATCHES. OF COURSE, THE PEOPLE HAD COWS. LOTS OF PEOPLE HAD COWS AND BARNES. NEVER DID KNOW FOR SURE, BUT THEY THOUGHT IT WAS SOME BOYS PLAYING WITH MATCHES AND THE FIRE SPREAD.

Tell me some of the buildings that are still being used that you did some of the plumbing.

W. T. WAGGONER BUILDING, FIRST CHRISTIAN CHURCH, LEONARD BUILDING, ALL THE LEONARD BUILDINGS, FIRST NATIONAL BANK. MANY HAVE BEEN TORN DOWN.

You said you all had cars to get to the jobs in later years.

WHEN I WENT IN BUSINESS, I MEAN. WHEN I WAS WORKING FOR THE OTHER MAN, I DROVE A HORSE AND WAGON.

When did you buy your first car?

MY OWN CAR - I BOUGHT IN 1921 - A MODEL "T".

And when did you all first have a telephone in the homes?

WE DIDN'T HAVE ANY DOWN THERE. HAD ONE HERE WHEN WE LIVED ON ST. LOUIS BEFORE MOVING OUT HERE IN 1916.

You're a member of the Masonic Lodge. How long have you been a member of it?

FIFTY YEARS. JOINED IN 1924. GOT MY 50 YEAR PIN LAST YEAR FROM POLYTECHNIC.

You've also been honored by the length of time you've been in the plumbing trade, is that correct?

WELL, I RECEIVED A NICE WATCH.

Now I need to know something more of your family life. When did you and your wife marry?

JULY 12, 1914.

(Going to wait and ask her for the details of that.)

THAT'S WHEN SHE TALKED ME INTO IT.

What decided you all to select this area of Fort Worth to build your first home?

I WAS DOING SOME PLUMBING WORK OUT IN THIS AREA AND THERE WAS A BIG ADVERTISEMENT DOWN BY WHAT THEY CALL THE STOP, WHERE THEY HAVE THE DRUGSTORE. THEY USED TO HAVE WHAT THEY CALL A STOP - A BENCH, LITTLE SHED AND WALL ON THE NORTH SIDE. THAT WAS OPEN ON ENDS - YOU COULD SEE THEM COMING THAT WAY AND THIS WAY. IT WAS UP TO YOU TO SEE THEM AND GO OUT AND FLAG THEM.

What was the location of that first home?

EAST LANCASTER - 3500 BLOCK.

How long did you live there?

TWO YEARS.

What caused you to change your address at that time?

WASN'T HAPPY WITH THAT LOCATION. STORM CAME ALONG AND BLEW THE ROOF OFF. MOVED TWO BLOCKS NORTH - PURINGTON STREET. BUILT OUR FIRST HOUSE THERE. LIVED IN THAT HOUSE 11 YEARS. THEN MOVED IT OFF AND MADE A RENT HOUSE AND BUILT A BRICK HOME.

What did this land look like when you first purchased it? I understand there was a well and several families shared the well.

WELL, YES. WATER WAS FURNISHED FROM PRIVATE WATER WELL OWNED BY TANDY. THE LINE RUN UP AND DOWN AND FURNISHED THE PEOPLE.

Wasn't this land originally part of a big dairy farm?

WASN'T DAIRY - RAISING CATTLE. OWNED BY GEORGE TANDY.

We note that George Tandy was one of the early time settlers here. Can you name some of the other early residents?

NOT OUT IN HERE, NO. JOHN JUSTIN, R. E. MEDFORD, W. D. CLOUD, LEWIS TANDY.

You all started a family. Where did your children go to school?

TANDY SCHOOL.

Was it already established when you built the first house here or was it established later?

JUST SHORTLY THEREAFTER THE FIRST HOUSE. OPENED 1922. OF COURSE, MEADOWBROOK HAS CHANGED SO MUCH. VERY FEW HOUSES OUT HERE THAT WAS HERE AT THAT TIME. HAD A COW - MILK COW. MOST OF THE NEIGHBORS HAD A MILK COW.

Did you have a garden?

COULDN'T BRAG ON THAT - TOO HARD A WORK.

Was it heavily wooded?

NO, IT WAS MORE OPEN LAND - PRAIRIE LAND.

Now you mentioned the Interurban. Was this your means of transportation back and forth to town?

THE INTERURBAN RAN FROM FORT WORTH TO DALLAS AND WE COULD CATCH IT EVERY HOUR - ONCE AN HOUR.

What did it cost you to ride it?

IT COST 20¢.  
HAD A PLACE CALLED STOP TANDY. JUST ACROSS THE STREET FROM DOWN THERE.

As I understand it, there used to be a lake called Tandy. Where was it?

IT'S WHERE THE DRUGSTORE IS. OFF THE HIGHWAY FROM WHERE

WE LIVED. RIGHT WHERE THE PRESENT WARD DRUGSTORE IS.  
3500 BLOCK EAST LANCASTER.

Could you tell me if the Depression made a great deal of difference in your way of life? As I recall you were in the line at the bank.

I WAS IN BUSINESS ABOUT FOUR YEARS AND WAS DOING FAIRLY WELL ON A SMALL BASIS AND HAD BUILT UP A SIZEABLE AMOUNT BANK ACCOUNT AND ONE DAY THE BANK WENT BROKE AND CLOSED UP AND AFTER A PERIOD OF TEN YEARS, I GRADUALLY COLLECTED 50 PERCENT OF WHAT I HAD ON DEPOSIT, WHICH WAS IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD OF \$5,000.

Well, it was due to your being able to watch your money that you were able to build the nice house that you now live in at a time when alot of people that were now having a great deal of difficulty in even making a living.

SURE WAS. YES.

This house - give me the location of where you now live.

3601 PURINGTON. LIVED IN IT SINCE 1931.

I don't know why. I was thinking it was 1936 that you built this house. All right, we're getting on into the war time years now. Did this make a great deal of difficulty for you as far as labor and getting supplies? How did it affect you?

WELL, IT DID MAKE A DIFFERENCE, BUT I USUALLY MANAGED. AS A RULE, THERE WAS ENOUGH LEFT OVER TO TAKE CARE OF MY NEEDS.

Well, during the war it was primarily repair work.

WELL, REPAIR WORK, THEN THERE WAS ALOT OF MEN WHO HAD BEEN OUT OF WORK FOR SEVERAL YEARS AND THEY WERE GLAD TO GO TO WORK. UP TO THAT TIME THERE WAS ALOT OF UNEMPLOYMENT.

So you continued to keep your business there on 11th Street?

YES. KEPT IT THERE FOR 21 YEARS, THEN MOVED OVER TO 1412 THROCKMORTON.

Do you recall some of the people that you have had contact with, well-known people in Fort Worth?

BURNS CONSTRUCTION COMPANY, THE WATT REYNOLDS' FAMILY AND THE LEONARD FAMILY.

You've done alot of work for the Carter Foundation?

AMON CARTER FOUNDATION AND AMON CARTER PERSONALLY.



What kind of a man did Amon Carter strike you as being?

VERY MUCH BUSINESS. VERY FAIR IN TRADE.

And what would you say has been the biggest change in Fort Worth - the biggest changes that you can think of.

IN 1936 THEY HAD THE TEXAS CENTENNIAL HERE. I DID LOTS OF WORK OUT THERE FOR THEM. I DID A NUMBER OF CONTRACTS OUT THERE. THAT WAS REALLY ABOUT THE BIGGEST CHANGE - OR THE CHANGE OF COMING OUT OF THE DEPRESSION - IN '36.

And then, the end of the war was reached. Then there was a big building boom, wasn't there?

YES.

And what would you say was sections of Fort Worth that were opened up that hadn't been in creation before that time.

RESIDENT SECTIONS - TCU AND THE ADDITION SOUTH OF TCU. WHAT DO THEY CALL THAT OUT THERE? WEDGEWOOD, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS - LOTS OF THAT STUFF WAS PFAIRIE LAND - OUT THERE WHERE THE CENTENNIAL WAS, IT WAS GROWN UP WITH JOHNSON GRASS. NOW, HERE ON THE EAST SIDE OF TOWN THERE'S BEEN A BIG CHANGE, TOO.

When we bought our lot shortly after WW II, Tierney Road was the city limits.

WELL, SYCAMORE CREEK WAS THE CITY LIMITS WHEN WE FIRST MOVED OUT HERE. WE WERE IN THE COUNTRY WHEN WE MOVED OUT HERE.

Oh, you weren't in town?

NO. SYRAMORE CREEK WAS THE CITY LIMITS AND THEY FINALLY MOVED IT OUT HERE - I GUESS IT WAS TIERNEY ROAD WHERE YOU SAID, THEN, 'COURSE, LATER ON, FURTHER OUT.

Now, I remember something that I know you'll remember. Our going out to see the Childs who were having a house constructed on Weiler. The little lake that was across the street from them is surrounded by houses now. And now, of course, that's Eastern Hills which is a very nice residential section, but that was the only house out there in the boondocks.

YES. WEILER GOT AFTER ME TO BUY SOME OF THAT STUFF THERE. ONE REASON I DIDN'T WAS THAT I DIDN'T HAVE ANY MONEY, AND ANOTHER REASON, I WASN'T INTERESTED IN IT.

Well, what political party are you a member of?

OF THE BEST MAN! I'VE VOTED DEMOCRATS AND I'VE VOTED  
REPUBLICANS - BOTH.

You're more or less an Independent. Let's get back to some of the earlier times. I'm interested in some of the terms that some of the people have used - they used the word "hack", "jitneys", "Interurban". Now all of these terms are not familiar to young people and this tape is going to be for the young people.

THE INTERURBAN WAS BUILT IN 1903.

When did they stop having street cars?

I COULDN'T SAY WHAT YEAR - SOMEWHERE AROUND '34 - '36 - LET'S  
CALL IT '35. GRADUALLY TOOK THEM UP. NOW THEY BUILT ONE  
OVER HERE ALONG ABOUT 1925.

Over where?

MEADOW BROOK. COME UP HERE AND ENDED RIGHT HERE ON  
AYRES STREET. BUILT STREET CAR TRACKS AND THAT WAS THE END  
OF THE LINE THEN. THEY BUILT IT IN ABOUT 1930 - AND IT WAS  
ONE OF THE LAST ONES TO GET KILLED.

Now I know that when you were a young man prior to the time that you married, you had a motorcycle which was considered really the thing at that time. Tell me about some of the places you went - for instance, you mentioned that you used to go out toward the lake.

REALLY NINE-MILE BRIDGE - 10-MILE BRIDGE. THERE WAS NO  
EAGLE MOUNTAIN LAKE.

Was there a park?

NO. JUST A WOODED AREA. LAKE WORTH WAS CONSTRUCTED  
FIRST. THAT'S WHERE I COURTED MY WIFE. ONE FELLOW CLAIMED  
I STOLE HER WITH GASOLINE, BUT I KNEW HER BEFORE THAT.

You all had met when young people, when you all were visiting.

I WAS IN THE MEAT MARKET AND I SERVED HER SISTER MEAT. SHE  
HAD A SISTER THAT LIVED OUT IN RIVERSIDE. AND SHE WAS VISITING  
HER SISTER - THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS.

Well, you had a number of brothers and one sister and, of course, they got grown up and scattered, so you were really the only one that went into the plumbing business.

YES.

Now what did some of the others do?

MY OLDEST BROTHER, HENRY, WAS A BLACKSMITH. WORKED FOR A. H. KELLER OVER 20 YEARS. WHERE LEONARDS ARE NOW. NEXT YOUNGEST BROTHER WAS A CARPENTER, BERNARD SCHMIDT. THEN THE OTHER BROTHER WAS JOE - HE DIED WHEN ONLY 13 YEARS OLD. HE WAS WITH THE STAR TELEGRAM FOR SOME 10 YEARS. WILL SCHMIDT ESTABLISHED A BUSINESS IN WACO - ENGRAVING BUSINESS AND IS THERE AT THE PRESENT TIME.

Then you had one sister, Frieda.

RIGHT.

And, of course, she married and made a housewife.

YES.

She also taught music, didn't she?

YES.

You left your old home place out off 28th and Belknap and moved into tow. Where did you move?

WHAT'S NOW EAST BROADWAY. CORNER BROADWAY AND VICKERY. BY THE WAY, I'LL SHOW YOU A PICTURE OF THE HOUSE THAT WAS THERE. WE MOVED AWAY FROM THERE IN 1910.

With all the convenience that we have now, we take for granted, but back in the days when you were a young man with a family, you had to buy all these new-fangled electric appliances. Do you recall when you got the first refrigerator for the family.

ABOUT 1924. ELECTRIC REFRIGERATOR.

And prior to that time how did you keep food?

IN THE ICEBOX. EVERY OTHER DAY THE ICE MAN WOULD LEAVE US 50 LBS OF ICE. AND WE KEPT THINGS LIKE BUTTER AND MEAT ON ICE, BUT ALOT OF THINGS WE DID NOT KEEP IN THE ICEBOX. WASN'T ROOM FOR IT.

And you had a telephone out here too, I suppose.

LATER - WE DIDN'T AT FIRST. WE GOT THE TELEPHONE AROUND 1925.

As I understand it, you always had a car as soon as you were able to get one.

THE FIRST CAR I EVER BOUGHT WAS IN 1921.

And it was a Ford?

YES. A MODEL T.

And what was your next car?

THE NEXT CAR - WE HAD A PONTIAC. OF COURSE, IN THOSE DAYS WHEN A CAR WAS THREE YEARS OLD, YOU HAD TO THROW IT IN THE JUNK PILE.

Why was that?

WELL, THEY JUST WASN'T MADE GOOD.

I didn't realize that. I thought some of those old Model T's just lasted forever.

OH WELL, MY BROTHER, ALBERT, BOUGHT ONE ONE TIME FOR \$5.00. WHEN YOU'D DRIVE OUT, YOU'D HAVE TO PUSH IT BACK HOME. NO, ACTUALLY, THREE OR FOUR YEARS OLD - BUT FOUR YEARS WAS A REAL OLD CAR. AND THE PAINT WOULD GO OFF WITHIN THE FIRST YEAR. YOU SEE, THEY DIDN'T USE ENAMEL LIKE THEY DO NOW. NOW THEY USE ENAMEL AND BAKE IT ON AND IT LASTS LONGER. NOW YOU TAKE A CAR OUT THERE 7 OR 8 YEARS OLD YOU CAN'T TELL BY LOOKING AT IT, BUT THOSE DAYS THEY WERE JUST PAINTED JUST LIKE YOU'D PAINT A HOUSE. THE MODEL T FORD I BOUGHT LOOKED GOOD WHEN IT WAS NEW AND AFTER ABOUT - I DON'T THINK IT HAD A YEAR YET, AND IT BEGAN LOOKING PRETTY BAD AND I BOUGHT SOME BLACK PAINT AND PAINTED IT A COAT OF BLACK PAINT AND IT LOOKED LIKE PATENT LEATHER SHOES AT FIRST, BUT AFTER ABOUT THREE MONTHS, IT'D GET TO PEELING OFF AND LOOK LIKE IT HAD THE SMALLPOX.

And you say you bought a Pontiac next. What year was that, or approximately?

1927.

Did you stay with the Pontiacs then?

NO, I JUST - THAT WAS THE ONLY PONTIAC I EVER HAD. SINCE THEN I BOUGHT CHEVROLETS, FORDS AND DODGES.

Can you kind of put your finger when this part of Fort Worth started building up?

WELL, IT REALLY STARTED WHEN THE INTERURBAN WAS FIRST BUILT IN 1903, BUT IN 1903 IT WAS ADVERTISED AS COUNTRY HOMES AND HALF-ACRE TRACTS. THAT'S WHY THE LOTS ARE SO BIG. BUT REALLY IT GOT STARTED ABOUT THE TIME I CAME OUT HERE - THE INTERURBAN GOT MORE POPULAR AND, OF COURSE, \_\_\_\_\_

ONE GREW ANOTHER - BUT MOST OF IT WAS STILL PRAIRIE LAND. HOUSE HERE AND THERE, AND THERE WAS NO PAVING. THE STREETS WERE JUST BLACK MUD AND YOU COULDN'T DRIVE A CAR OUT THERE AT ALL IN RAINY WEATHER.

Well, I've heard that there were a lot of interurban drivers that settled out kind of at the end of their line or somewhere out - was that Handley or Meadowbrook or what?

WELL, OF COURSE, THE INTERURBAN DID NOT HAVE AN END -- IT WENT FROM FORT WORTH TO DALLAS, YOU SEE, AND A LOT OF THEM LIVED IN HANDLEY. NOW HANDLEY WAS INTERURBAN HEADQUARTERS AS FAR AS THE ELECTRIC WAS CONCERNED. WHERE THE ELECTRIC PLANT IS NOW. OF COURSE, THAT'S WHAT STARTED OUR ELECTRIC PLANT. THE INTERURBAN WHEN THEY FIRST BUILT; THERE WAS A POWERHOUSE AT LAKE ERIE. NOW LAKE ERIE WAS NOT A RESORT -- BUT A DANCE HALL, HAD A DANCE HALL -- A FIGURE 8 -- YOU KNOW WHAT A FIGURE 8 IS. HAD ENTERTAINMENT -- I USED TO GO TO DANCES OUT AT LAKE ERIE, WHICH WAS LOCATED WHERE THE TEXAS ELECTRIC CO. IS NOW.

When was that Erie formed?

AS FAR BACK AS I CAN REMEMBER. I ATTENDED DANCES THERE IN 1910 TO 1912, SO IT WAS WAY BACK A LONG TIME AGO.

These drivers -- were they interurban drivers or were they streetcar drivers?

OF COURSE, DIFFERENT MEN -- WHAT THEY CALLED THE STREETCAR BARN WAS DOWN ON WHAT WE CALLED EAST FRONT THEN -- YOU KNOW WHERE THAT IS? YOU KNOW WHERE BARNDT'S UPHOLSTERY WAS? WELL, IT WAS RIGHT ACROSS THE STREET FROM THERE IN THE NEXT BLOCK. IT'S STILL THE BUS OUTFIT. THAT WAS THE CAR BARN. THE STREETCARS WENT IN THERE AT NIGHT. THEY STOPPED RUNNING THE STREETCARS AT NIGHT. USUALLY LAST STREETCARS STARTED DROPPING OFF ABOUT ALONG MIDNIGHT -- 11:00 OR 12:00. HAD WHAT THEY CALLED AN OWL LINE -- WOULD LEAVE DOWNTOWN AT 12:40 AND GO OUT TO THE END OF THE LINE -- POLYTECHNIC, ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, AND SO ON, THAT WAS THE LAST RUN. OF COURSE, ONE MAN DRIVER LI'VED OUT AT THIS END OF THE LINE AS A RULE, AND HE'D COME ON IN.

Now you mentioned Polytechnic -- was it more built up than this Meadowbrook area?

YES, IT WAS A SEPARATE CITY -- IT WAS NOT A PART OF FORT WORTH. POLYTECHNIC WAS A SEPARATE CITY. POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE, YOU SEE, OF COURSE THEY DON'T CALL IT POLYTECHNIC -- IT'S TWC NOW. POLYTECHNIC WAS AN OLD MEDICINE SCHOOL, YOU SEE. WAY BACK THERE AND IT WAS BUILT UP BUT IT WAS NOT ANYTHING LIKE MODERN. IT DIDN'T HAVE ANY SEWER -- THERE WERE VERY FEW SEWERS THEN.

What do you recall was out in Poly other than this college?

WELL, THAT'S ABOUT ALL, EXCEPT A COUPLE OF CHURCHES, AND THERE WAS A RESIDENCE -- OF COURSE NOT NEAR AS MANY AS THERE ARE NOW. HALFWAY OUT TO MASONIC HOME, YOU KNOW WHERE THAT IS, DON'T YOU?

Yes.

WELL, THERE WAS AN OPEN SPACE IN BETWEEN THERE.

Let's talk about some of these older buildings downtown, which are down now -- I am sure you remember the old depot.

TP DEPOT WAS LOCATED WHERE FRANK KENT IS NOW.

And what did it look like?

I'VE GOT A PICTURE AROUND HERE SOMEWHERE.

Describe it to me, if you can.

IT LOOKED LIKE A COUNTRY TOWN DEPOT WITH A HIGH STEEPLE ON IT. -- KIND OF LIKE A CHURCH STEEPLE. YOU COULD STAND ON MAIN STREET AND COULD SEE IT FROM ANYWHERE ON MAIN STREET -- YOU COULD LOOK AT IT ON ONE END AND THE COURTHOUSE ON THE OTHER. STONE BUILDING.

What kind of stone?

WELL, RED STONE.

There are several of those other buildings that have been torn down -- one was the library, wasn't it?

WELL, THE LIBRARY WAS TORN DOWN -- THIS ONE WAS BUILT AROUND 1904. AND IN 1905 TEDDY ROOSEVELT, THE PRESIDENT - HE CAME HERE. THE FIRST TIME A PRESIDENT HAD EVER BEEN IN TEXAS. QUITE AN EVENT. OF COURSE, HE DIDN'T HAVE AN AUTOMOBILE.

Wonder if that was the time he went on up to the Four 6 Ranch and on up into Oklahoma?

IT WAS THAT YEAR, YES. HE CAME HERE AND THEY HAD A BIG CELEBRATION AND THE PEOPLE OF FORT WORTH PLANTED A TREE DOWN THERE BY THE LIBRARY. AS YOU KNOW, THEY'VE MADE A LITTLE PARK THERE-- NO BIGGER THAN THIS ROOM. LITTLE THREE-CORNERED PARK RIGHT THERE ON 9TH AND HOUSTON. WELL, THEY WERE GOING TO HAVE A BIG HONOR -- GIVE HIM A BIG HONOR AND PLANTED A TREE. I HAD BEEN HELPING MY FATHER PLANT PEACH TREES - JUST A YEAR BEFORE THAT AND I HAD SEEN TEDDY ROOSEVELT'S PICTURE, WITH SCISSOR-TAILED COAT, IF YOU KNOW WHAT SCISSOR-TAIL COAT IS, A PRINCE ALBERT.

Yes, I do.

SO I WAS ANXIOUS TO SEE PRESIDENT ROOSEVELT GET OUT THERE AND DIG A HOLE AND PLANT THE TREE. THAT'S WHAT I THOUGHT HE WAS GOING TO HAVE TO DO. SO I GOT DOWN THERE -- THEY LET SCHOOL OUT THAT DAY AND I WENT DOWN THERE AND I WAS UP ON THE FRONT ROW -- A BIG CROWD THERE.

SPREAD OUT A RED CARPET FOR THEM TO WALK ON FROM THE CURB TO WHERE THE TREE WAS, WHICH WAS ONLY ABOUT 30 FT., SOMETHING LIKE THAT. OF COURSE, I WAS DISAPPOINTED BECAUSE THE HOLE WAS ALREADY DUG AND A PILE OF FRESH DIRT THERE AND SOMEBODY BROUGHT OUT A TREE ABOUT SIX-FOOT HIGH AND PUT IT INTO THE HOLE AND ROOSEVELT PUT A COUPLE OF SHOVELS OF DIRT IN IT. OF COURSE WHEN HE GOT THROUGH, HE MADE A LITTLE TALK. THE REST OF THEM HAD TO SAY SOMETHING, TOO.

So you didn't get to see him do any real work.

WELL, I SAW HIM WHAT YOU CALL PLANTED A TREE OR THROW SOME DIRT ON IT.

About how long did that tree live?

WELL, HERE, THAT'S THE FUNNY PART. THE TREE, RIGHT AFTER HE LEFT, I DON'T KNOW WHAT TIME OF THE YEAR, ANYWAY, WHEN HE LEFT, A SHORT TIME AFTER HE LEFT THE TREE DIED -- THE LEAVES ALL FELL OFF OF IT. AND IT DIED. THEY MADE A BIG JOKE OUT OF IT IN THE PAPER ON THE EDITORIAL PAGE. THEY SAID THAT ANY BUNCH OF GOOFS OUGHT TO KNOW BETTER THAN TO HAVE A REPUBLICAN PLANT A TREE IN TEXAS, BUT THAT TREE -- THE FLORISTS IN TOWN TRIED TO MAKE IT GROW -- THEY COULDN'T. SO THEN THAT FALL, THEY DUG IT UP AND PLANTED ANOTHER TREE THERE, AND IT GREW TO FAIRLY GOOD SIZE. IN 1936 WHEN THEY BUILT THE WILL ROGERS STUFF OUT THERE, THEY TRANSFERRED THIS TREE OUT TO THERE -- THE WOMEN'S CLUB HERE IN TOWN CONTROLLED IT -- PLANTED IT -- IT'S OUT THERE RIGHT NOW.

Oh, it is.

I UNDERSTAND THAT THERE'S A PLAQUE ON IT. THEY ALL SAY TEDDY ROOSEVELT PLANTED IT -- BUT TEDDY ROOSEVELT NEVER SAW THAT TREE, BUT THAT TREE TOOK THE PLACE OF THE TEDDY ROOSEVELT TREE. IT'S OUT THERE, THOUGH.

That's really interesting -- I didn't know that story. Now, that's the kind of thing we are trying to record. Because now there's lots of people that would see that out there and not know the story behind it. Do you remember when Will Rogers came and dedicated that thing out there?

YES.

Were you there?

NO, I DON'T BELIEVE I WAS THERE. AMON CARTER BROUGHT HIM HERE. SEE, HIM AND AMON CARTER WERE PRETTY GOOD FRIENDS.

Amon Carter gave a lot of Stetsons away, didn't he?

WHAT I STARTED TO SAY -- WILL ROGERS CAME AND AMON CARTER PUT UP A STATUE.

Yes, that's a beautiful statue. It's his horse, Soap Suds -- that's his name, I think.

THERE'S ANOTHER ONE, I THINK -- THAT SAME STATUE UP IN OKLAHOMA.

Yes, in his hometown, I think.

WELL, AMON CARTER HAD A LOT OF DIGNITARIES THAT HE ENTERTAINED OUT AT HIS PLACE. HE HAD A PLACE OUT THERE, CALLED I THINK, SHADY OAKS, AND HE'D THROW PARTIES OUT THERE. IN 1936 HE HAD QUITE A CROWD COMING DOWN FROM WASHINGTON, AMONG THEM, THE PRESIDENT WASN'T WITH THEM -- HE WAS ACQUAINTED WITH THE PRESIDENT, BUT THEN HE DIDN'T COME, WAS THE VICE PRESIDENT -- THAT LIVES DOWN THERE BELOW AUSTIN, WHAT'S HIS NAME?

John Garner.

JOHN GARNER WAS THERE AND A BUNCH OF THOSE CONGRESSMEN AND HE'D FIXED UP THIS PLACE, LIKE I SAY, HE HAD THIS, IT WAS A REGULAR FARM HOUSE THAT HE HAD FIXED UP -- FIXED BATHROOMS AND HAD A FEW EXTRA ROOMS -- WASN'T GREAT BIG FANCY BRICK HOME OR ANYTHING THAT A-WAY, BUT ANYWAY HE ENTERTAINED THERE. HE PUT UP A -- WHAT YOU CALL IT. LIKE A SIDESHOW OUTSIDE, AND HAD A GREAT WALL WITH A BIG PICTURE OF A TWO HEADED CALF AND ALL THAT STUFF, YOU KNOW.

Sorta carnival?

YEAH, CARNIVAL EFFECT. DURING PROHIBITION DAYS, HE HAD A GARAGE THERE TO ACCOMMODATE FOUR CARS -- PRETTY GOOD SIZED GARAGE YOU KNOW. SO HE HAD ME TO WORK UP A BAR. HE HAD A BAR THAT HE GOT A-HOLD OF HERE SOMEWHERE IN TOWN AND HE INSTALLED THAT -- I HOOKED IT UP FOR HIM. HAD THIS BUNCH -- GARNER AND THAT BUNCH. SO THEY'D THROW BIG PARTIES OUT THERE.

Who else in the way of dignitaries can you recollect having come to Fort Worth?



WELL, YOU STARTED TO SAY SOMETHING ABOUT THE WOLF HUNT. ALONG ABOUT THAT TIME -- I DON'T KNOW WHETHER IT WAS THE YEAR BEFORE -- OR I THINK MAYBE IT WAS THE YEAR AFTER THAT -- NO IT WAS WHEN TEDDY ROOSEVELT'S TERM WAS UP -- HE SERVED A TERM AND A HALF -- YOU SEE, HE TOOK MCKINLEY'S PLACE WHEN MCKINLEY WAS ASSASSINATED -- THEN HE WAS RE-ELECTED. MCKINLEY WAS ASSASSINATED IN 1901 AND HE FINISHED OUT UNTIL 1904, THEN IT WAS TIME FOR A NEW PRESIDENT, SO HE WAS RE-ELECTED 1904-1908 AND THEN 1908 THEY WANTED TO NOMINATE HIM AGAIN, AND HE SAID HE DIDN'T WANT IT.

HE WORKED FOR TAFT -- HELPED ELECT TAFT. HE WANTED TO GO ON A BIG WOLF HUNT -- WAS QUITE A HUNTER AND HE WANTED TO COME DOWN HERE AND HIM AND BURK BURNETT WAS FRIENDS, AND THEY WENT ON A BIG WOLF HUNT IN OKLAHOMA. THEN, ALSO IN THAT TERM, THE FOLLOWING YEAR, HE TOOK A BIG AFRICAN TRIP AND THAT WAS A REAL BIG TRIP THAT ONE OVER THERE, YOU KNOW.

Well, now didn't you take care of the plumbing facilities at Burk Burnett Headquarters there at Guthrie?

YES, I INSTALLED THE PLUMBING IN THE RANCH.

It was the 4-Six Ranch - in 1917 - during WWI. Now is this where -- no, it wasn't where Roosevelt went, because it wasn't constructed.

NO, ROOSEVELT WAS UP THE OTHER SIDE OF WICHITA FALLS. OKLAHOMA, SOMEWHERE IN OKLAHOMA.

The Headquarters for the 4-Six Ranch that they're still using, is that the same building you worked on in 1917?

1917 - FALL.

And What did you do? Just move up there and work for awhile?

I WENT UP THERE BY MYSELF -- OF COURSE, MY FAMILY DIDN'T GO, BUT I WENT UP THERE DURING WORLD WAR I AND WE HAD TO TAKE THE TRAIN UP THERE -- NO SUCH THINGS AS HIGHWAYS AND VERY FEW AUTOMOBILES. ALWAYS TOOK THE FORT WORTH-DENVER TO WICHITA FALLS OR SOMEWHERE UP IN THERE, THEN TOOK ANOTHER LITTLE TRAIN OVER TO PADUCAH, THEN FROM THERE, WHICH IS 30 MILES NORTH OF GUTHRIE, WE CAUGHT A MAIL TRAIN -- MAN HAD A MODEL T FORD -- HE CARRIED THE MAIL DOWN THERE AND FOR \$2.00 HE'D CARRY PASSENGERS.

How long did you stay there?

I STAYED THERE ABOUT TWO MONTHS.

You went to Mexia during the Boom Days down there, didn't you?

WELL, I WOULDN'T SAY THAT WAS THE BOOM DAYS -- I WENT TO MEXIA BEFORE I WENT IN BUSINESS. I WAS WORKING FOR ANOTHER MAN AT THAT TIME.

What about when you worked at Thurber?

WELL, IN THURBER -- YOU SAID MEXIA, DIDN'T YOU? I WAS THINKING ABOUT THURBER. I WENT TO THURBER IN 1913 AND I WORKED FOR ABOUT FOUR MONTHS. I WENT TO THURBER - WORKED FOR THE TP COAL AND OIL CO. AT THAT TIME THURBER HAD A POPULATION OF AROUND 9,000 PEOPLE -- A BIG COAL MINING TOWN -- SINCE THEN, IT'S BEEN DESERTED -- A GHOST TOWN NOW. THEN ALSO IN ABOUT 1921 I WAS WORKING FOR A MAN -- HE HAD A CONTRACT IN MEXIA AND I WORKED DOWN THERE. PUT UP A HOTEL DOWN THERE IN MEXIA.

Haven't you also done a lot of work on the school building in the area?

YES, I DID - SINCE I'VE BEEN IN BUSINESS, I'VE HAD A NUMBER OF CONTRACTS ON SCHOOL BUILDINGS. POLY JR. HIGH, I BELIEVE IT'S CALLED NOW -- THERE CLOSE TO THE BANK. I HAD THE CONTRACT ON THAT. I BELIEVE IT'S CALLED WILLIAM JAMES. ONE THIS SIDE -- THE LARGEST ONE OF THE TWO -- THERE WITHIN A BLOCK OF ONE ANOTHER. WILLIAM JAMES, I THINK IS WHAT THEY USED TO CALL THE POLYTECHNIC HIGH SCHOOL. IT WAS BUILT BY THE CITY OF POLYTECHNIC. IT AND THE TANDY SCHOOL -- IT WAS IN THE POLYTECHNIC SCHOOL DISTRICT.

Now, your children (when they first started to high school) went to Polytechnic?

YES THEY DID.

What about this place that we now call Oakland Lake and White Lake -- we used to call it Fostic Lake, didn't we?

YES.

Who owned it? Was it city property?

NO, IT BELONGED TO A MAN BY THE NAME OF WHITE. HE HAD A BIG DAIRY DOWN THERE. THEY JUST DAMMED UP A LOW PLACE AND MADE A LAKE OUT OF IT. THERE WAS A BIG DAIRY THERE. RIGHT ACROSS THE STREET FROM WHERE BUDDIE'S IS NOW. ALMOST IN THE CORNER WHERE THE TOLL-ROAD COMES THROUGH. ANYWAY, WAY DOWN THERE IN THE FLATS DOWN THERE, TOWARD THE RIVER, LOW PLACE. THEY HAD LOTS OF CATTLE DOWN THERE. LATER BOUGHT BY AMON CARTER.

When the river used to flood before there was any kind of protection, etc. didn't all that low land used to flood?

YES, FIRST STREET WOULD FLOOD. ALL THAT DOWN THERE, WELL UP CLOSE TO WHERE HALTOM ROAD COMES INTO FIRST STREET DOWN TO WHERE YOU BRANCH OFF DOWN HERE -- WHERE THE FORK IS, DOWN ON 4TH STREET. THAT WAS ALL UNDER WATER. ALSO IT WAS UNDER WATER TOWARD RIVERSIDE.

Was Riverside incorporated?

NO, JUST LIKE HANDLEY, NEVER WAS INCORPORATED, WAS JUST A TOWN, JUST THERE -- SETTLEMENT.

Well, Handley didn't become part of Fort Worth proper until just in recent years?

YES, THAT'S RIGHT. IT NEVER WAS INCORPORATED. THEY HAD A SCHOOL DISTRICT OUT AT HANDLEY -- HANDLEY SCHOOL DISTRICT, BUT NO CITY.

But, didn't they have what you might call any big business out that way?

NO, JUST A FEW THERE ON THE PIKE.

Well, where did you all do your shopping? Did you go to Poly for your groceries?

NO, THERE WAS ONE GROCERY STORE DOWN HERE BETWEEN THE INTER-URBAN TRACKS, AND THE AMERICAN SEED COMPANY, AND ANOTHER ONE UP BY SAGAMORE HILL BAPTIST CHURCH. BUT WE ORDERED ONCE A WEEK FROM TURNER AND DINGEE. THEY DELIVERED OUT HERE.

We're going to do an interview of the Hallaran Family that owns Turner and Dingee. Was all of that rough, broken land over here to the East where animals lived?

I'LL TELL YOU WHERE THAT MIGHT HAVE GOTTEN MIXED UP. I WILL SAY THIS. WHEN I WAS A VERY SMALL BOY, WE WERE LIVING OUT THERE IN THE COUNTRY ON BELKNAP AND EMMA NEWBERRY -- YOU KNOW EMMA NEWBERRY -- WELL, SHE WAS JUST A GIRL -- PROBABLY 16 TO 18 YEARS OLD. SHE WAS PULLING ME IN A LITTLE WAGON AND WE WENT DOWN TO THE ROADER PLACE WHICH WAS THE NEXT NEIGHBOR -- DOWN THE STREET ABOUT A BLOCK -- AND WE SAW WHAT WE THOUGHT WAS A WOLF. I DON'T KNOW MIGHT HAVE JUST BEEN A GERMAN SHEPHERD DOG. HE DID CROSS THE ROAD IN FRONT OF US AND WE CALLED IT A WOLF. BUT I THINK THAT'S WHERE THAT CAME FROM. YOU KNOW EMMA NEWBERRY A NUMBER OF YEARS AFTER THAT AND UP UNTIL THE TIME SHE DIED -- SHE MENTIONED THAT.

Well, was there any wild life, you might say, or anything down in these rough river bottoms here?

NO, NOTHING EXCEPT WHAT YOU SEE NOW -- FOX OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT.

When you all built this house, you didn't really have any close neighbors at all, did you?

WELL, THIS HOUSE OVER HERE WAS THERE -- MRS. SHERMAN'S MOTHER (MRS. COX) LIVED THERE. THAT HOUSE AND THE DONAHUE HOUSE -- AND THE JUSTICE HOUSE.

Then the Burton's lived where? Two Doors down?

IN THIS BLOCK HERE, ACROSS THE STREET, THERE WASN'T ANY HOUSE AT ALL.

Well, did they do like you did? Order groceries and Turner and Dingee would bring them out to them?

SOME OF THEM HAD CARS.

Mr. Schmidt said that you got your refrigerator, but you had your ice box before that time, When did you get -- say, your first washing machine?

IN THE MID-20'S.

I was trying to get just a picture of what times were like. I know you said you dressed your little boys in stripes. was it overall or coveralls?

COVERALLS.

Now, when did they build the home down here? The home for orphans?

LONG BEFORE WE WERE HERE. IT WAS BUILT SOMEWHERE AROUND 1906.

Well, then there was really not anybody beyond you all, particularly, except just farms?

LIKE I SAY, ONE HOUSE HERE ON THE CORNER. WE KEPT A COW AND WE'D STAKE HER OUT THERE.

I remember something, but I don't remember when. When was the picture show built out here?

IT WAS BUILT IN THE LATE 30'S OR EARLY 40'S. THERE WERE TWO DRUG STORES- THERE WAS IRBY'S (LATER CLOUD'S) AND MORRISON'S. THERE WHERE KRAGEN'S IS NOW, THERE WAS A WORTH. I'M TALKING ABOUT THE NORTH SIDE WHERE KRAGEN'S IS NOW. MR. CARROLL WAS THERE. WELL, I KNOW THAT WAS THE ONLY PLACE AROUND HERE FOR US TO SHOP. AND THERE WAS A LITTLE VARIETY STORE - BARTONS- FRITZ AND RUTH BARTON.

What else was up there?

THE BARBER - MR. PAYTON. HE FIRST HAD A SHOP AT THE LITTLE CORNER SHOPPING CENTER, AT MEADOWBROOK AND AYERS, ABOUT 1926.