

**Mrs. Frank (Fannie) Farrington**  
**Interview 11a**  
**1954, Diboll, Texas**  
**John Larson, Interviewer**

**ABSTRACT:** In this 1954 interview with John Larson of the Forest History Foundation, Fannie Farrington (1876-1967) tells of her experiences in Diboll beginning in 1903, when she and her husband moved there from St. Louis to work in the Southern Pine Lumber Company commissary. Mrs. Farrington was extremely active in developing the community's early educational, social, and spiritual life and discusses the Temple family's philanthropy, the schools, churches, and town leaders. She also comments on early recreation and amusements, politics, and World Wars I and II. *A note on page 4 explains that the original recording became difficult to transcribe in places, which is indicated in the transcription by asterisks and underlines.*

**John Larson:** Tell me how you came to Diboll, Mrs. Farrington?

**Fannie Farrington:** I came through Mr. Tom Temple, the founder of this mill. I met him in St. Louis at a reception at a cousin's of mine. And he was a Christian Scientist and so was I. We had the same teacher, not the same classes together, but we had the same teacher, Mr. James Logwood

**JL:** Was he from St. Louis?

**FF:** Yes. And in our discussion that night – I've always been interested in church work all my life, and whether Mr. Logwood had told Mr. Temple that I was – anyhow, Mr. Temple told me that he was looking for a couple to come to his mill and he told me that's what the deal was. There was need of someone to come to the mill for the upbuilding of the mill, socially, spiritually, and morally. And then he told me about two saloons they had and just one little church and told me the needs of Diboll. And in two weeks we were in Diboll.

**JL:** This was in 1903?

**FF:** 1903. We landed here the fourth of February, 1903.

**JL:** Your husband went to work...?

**FF:** My husband went to work in the commissary, and then he gave me the millinery business that I might make something for myself. I didn't come here on a salary. I, my salary come from my school, my work there. But by taking that, I knew that I could reach some girls who needed to know how to sew and put them in a position where they could make a living for themselves. And I had two of the Broker girls working with me for the two years, and they have a brother living here now. They're very lovely girls, and

during that two years they were able to run that business by themselves. And having bought material for the Southern Pine Lumber Company's store, I...

**JL:** You mean the actual goods?

**FF:** Yes, they asked me if I would come and take charge of that department. And I did. Then after I worked there, I began to learn more and more about the people. I began then to take up the work that I really came to do. You know, you have to work a while before you know people and before you know what you are expected of.

**JL:** Where they'll confide in you and tell you what their problems are.

**FF:** We had services for a while at the hotel. First Sunday I came here to the hotel we had Christian Science services, but I came to work among the people regardless of denomination – regardless of race, creed or color. I worked with the colored people just as much as I did with the white people, wherever they needed a lift.

**JL:** I understand that when people were ill, for example, that you'd hear about it in the store and then you would go out and see what could be done for them.

**FF:** Everything that I could do help them in any way, that was my work. But Mr. Temple was such a spiritual man, his spirituality came first with him, because he knew if you were spiritual the other would be cared for. So often he said to me, "Mrs. Farrington, God, Divine Help, always has and always will meet every human need."

**JL:** Your book club also interested me. Would you tell me about that?

**FF:** We had, I imagine it was about sixteen of us, and we bought books that we felt – the new publications, you know – sometimes you don't know books until you get a hold of them, but we tried to get good books and we would pass them around. Every sixteen weeks – we met once a week – every sixteen weeks we'd each buy a book and then we would discuss our books and then we'd have a social hour, probably a little contest or something like that kind.

**JL:** What kind of contests would you have?

**FF:** Probably sounds really crude to you, but one especially I know, there were advertisements cut from a paper and we were supposed to take where they came from and what company they advertised, like "gold dust twins". Of course, everybody knew that, and there were some that were not so easy. But it gave an idea of what we were reading and how we were paying attention.

First we had no other social activities but the church. We had a band at the time and we had an orchestra and, of course, baseball played a big part for the bands. We had, one summer we had two or three boys from Virginia. Mr. Temple was a Virginian, and Mr. Watson Walker was a Virginian, and Mr. Henry Temple was a Virginian, and they

had three good ball players. We always had sports here as they would have anywhere else.

Diboll's most always been a very progressive little town. It had push behind it, but I might say this, that it was always for the good. Every manager that's been here since I've been with the company have been wonderful people. After Mr. Watson Walker died, then we had our managers, joint-managership, Mr. O'Hara and Mr. Strauss – they're both brilliant men. And after they died I think Mr. Henry Temple came back. He came here, he and his wife as bride and groom from Virginia and they lived in our home for two years and in that way we became very close friends. I knew, I guess, Mr. Henry Temple, who passed away about four or five years ago, better than anyone because we had lived in the home. They came here from Virginia and he worked from pushing dollies; we didn't have electric trucks like they have now and we didn't even have the horse truck. The men pushed the lumber on the dolly, and Mr. Henry Temple started that way. He passed away, he was I think, vice president then and general manager and he was the same Henry Temple that he was when he was pushing dollies. Just a prince. And always doing something nice, doing' they just helped people. They done everything in their power to lift everybody and coming on down then, Mr. Arthur Temple, the one they have here today, is one of the most progressive men – I believe he is one of the most progressive men in the United States. And he's the same way.

I left off a while ago where the logging camp is. I had worked with the First Methodist Church for eighteen years as superintendent of the children's division, but I knew before they ever brought that logging camp in here, that those children had never had an opportunity for Christian training. And I knew before they ever come in that I was going to work there. Well, for two years we started in on them in a Boy Scout hall and then we provided a little building; the Scouts wanted their own building, which they should have. We had a little house built, four room house, and we held church and Sunday school there. Later Mr. Henry Temple said, "I'm just tired of all this moving around. We'll just build a little chapel over there", which he did.

**JL:** In the logging camp?

**FF:** Yes, they moved the logging camp here. Built all those little houses, and they built all those houses just like little shacks. But I'll tell you why. They expected to move into logging camp, but for some reason they had different means of handling the logs and all now and they didn't move them. So when Mr. Arthur came, he had all those little shacks moved out, put on a foundation, and he had the loveliest little addition over across the way that you ever wanted to see. These houses are now like little modern houses. You know, they don't build those tall houses any more. It's just a little modern village over there. You'd just love it. They call it Lakeview. And I hope before you leave here you can drive by and see that part of the mill and see the view from the place.

**JL:** When these people moved in what problems did they create with the old community? Any at all?

**FF:** There was a new set of problems at Diboll before they moved in. It was pretty well churched; we had gotten rid of our saloons years ago; and the people here were making a

salary. We didn't have very many to care for. When they moved the camps in we had a new work to start. Some of those children had never been in a church. They didn't have very many clothes, I don't think, because they were not properly clad. I don't know whether the fathers spent the money and the mothers didn't dress the children. Anyhow, they were just—they needed care, they needed help. They needed training in every way. And through friends of mine, Mr. Arthur Temple for one, but I had that work all down through the years, I'd get clothes from different friends of mine and place them. Worn clothes, but they were nice clothes, beautiful things. Some of them I'd like to have myself. But anyhow we have helped dress the poor people. We helped care for them in clothes and we cared for them spiritually. And we cared for them over there when they were sick and needed help. Before we had the ambulance and everything here like we have now, we would see that they had the proper medicine and the proper care and we worked with them until now there's not very much need over there because they are moved and most of them are buying their own homes, over on the other side.

Mr. Arthur Temple is giving them \*\_\_\_\_\_ I'm sure, and letting them pay \$10.00 a month and that applies as a payment on the house instead of rent. And people are owning their own buildings and they're improving them and it's just lovely. And they're building another mission over there now because, you see, they are moving all the ones that I worked with over on the other side. And they're having no- the Baptists are building a lovely little church, and I am so glad because they needed a church. So I don't know how long the other will last.

We still have the Spanish people, the Mexicans. I still work with them and we probably have twenty-five to thirty over there yet that I'm working with. They're just lovely people.

**JL:** You also did some work with the parent-teachers in your town?

**FF:** Oh, I worked with parent-teachers up until- oh, I guess four or five years ago.

**JL:** And you were the first president?

**FF:** I was the first president.

**JL:** And what did you do then in those early days?

*\*The gap in the above text and the gaps that follow are due to interference on the tape recorder, and because of ill health Mrs. Farrington was unable to fill it in for us in the usual procedure followed in our oral history interview. [Note from Forest History Foundation].*

**FF:** Well, we made all the money that we could at little carnivals and things we could get and that money at first was used altogether for the purpose that the parent-teachers were organized for. Parent-teacher organizations, as you know, are organized for under-

privileged children, to lift them. You know, the children will develop a complex if they are not properly dressed and can't have the things that other children have. And some children are taught not to associate, you know, with those that can't be dressed and can't play an equal part in life as they should. So we saw that they had books and pencils and everything that they needed to start off to school with and we also saw that they had clothes. And at our church, down at the Methodist church when I worked down there, the women's society of Christian service saw that every child that went there was properly dressed, so they wouldn't feel- so that they could take their place with the others and not be embarrassed by not having the proper clothes. And there's some of the ladies here in town today that adopted - we each adopted a child to look after their clothes, and there was one lady here who even washed for these girls, bought their clothes and she washed and saw that her children...and those girls have grown up to make fine women and have their own homes. They're lovely mothers, because they had that training and that care.

And then, I was sorry, I wanted to tell Mr. Arthur somehow, about another thing that we did, a few of us, was to find boys and girls that were really worthy and some way or another God managed to let them have a college education. And one of the girls was here at homecoming and she said, "I want to meet Mr. Arthur Temple." She was a lovely girl. She was a very, very poor girl, but a lovely girl. She had two years of college education. She married a splendid young man; has a lovely home. But she hasn't forgotten that we - I think she won a scholarship- and her clothes and all the things were furnished, all but coats. So I told Mr. Tom Temple about it, and he said, "Well, just pick her out a coat." And she said, "I'd just like to meet Mr. Arthur and tell him how much I appreciated that. It so often comes to me, and what the Southern Pine Lumber Company has meant to me, and the workers in the Southern Pine Lumber," She lived at T \* \_\_\_\_\_, Texas, and married \* \_\_\_\_\_ and has a lovely home and is just a wonderful Christian mother. She's doing that wonderful work. You know, it's all God's world. Don't make any difference whether they stay here, but she's carrying on the work. The principles, the foundation for that work was laid right here, so we are proud of her. She wrote a letter that came out in our little paper thanking the Booster Club for making this homecoming possible. It was a splendid letter and that's what I expected her to do because I know her better than anybody else. She comes here to see me three or four times a year. Now that's an example of the work, there.

There's a young man that went to college and he went on money that was given him, not even demanding a note. He went to college and through the years before he got to where he could get established in a business, but after he did, he paid all that money back with interest and it was not a note demanded of him. There's one of our young men.

And we have over from our little mission church, we have workers, I guess, that we started over there, in every church in town. 'Course they've grown up and have gone. We have a preacher, one of the boys, a Baptist preacher, and he's just remarkable and we have other girls and Christian mothers. They come back and bring their children to sing little songs that I have taught them. The work has been a glorious work. It's work that even after those who have worked their hardest have passed on they grow, the seeds have been sown in the hearts and lives of boys and girls here, that will bring a harvest that only

eternity will tell the good. And it was all because one man had a vision; Mr. Tom Temple had a vision. He knew what he wanted Diboll to be.

I have gone over when I was stronger and given devotions and helped them in their church work. And then I've always- every time they'd come into the store- they were just, they were treated exactly like you'd be if you'd come in because they're God's children too, you know. And the colored race has made quite a contribution to the world. I don't know if we're ready for that vote that's coming off in another month or not, but there's a place for them and there was work for us to do with them. And when I'd go I'd always feel kind of uplifted because you know, what they believe it comes from their heart. Their songs are beautiful; they're uplifting and Mr. Henry Temple used to go over real often. Mr. Arthur does too. You see, since Mr. Arthur's been here, I haven't been associated with him very much because when I resigned my work in the store I began to feel myself going down and I haven't been so well since. I had, but I'm really feeling a lot better than I did, but I'm still going back. I'm going back before very long. I promised to come back and give another devotion again. I think I should be able to. But we have uplifted them every day.

Now they have a community center over there and they have, I think, three churches over there. Well, I know all those colored people are my friends, and I just like to go and help them if there is anything that I can say or do why I- - we have our customs - - please let me say "we" instead of "I." I never have done anything myself; it was just that I've been led. But we have helped them in so many ways. We have helped them spiritually; we have helped them when they have been in need; we've helped them with food; and we've helped them with clothes.

**JL:** You've done more or less the same things for them as you've done for the whites?

**FF:** Well I wish I had. I couldn't imagine anybody living in a little ol' shack like they live in and wearing silk clothes. You know, that was the ideal, instead of living, seemed to be that the people wanted to dress according to our aims in life. But they were happy with them, and that was all right too.

But things have changed so. There is some very intelligent people over there now and they have lovely churches and they are training their boys and girls; I think they make better men and women. We don't have so very much to do with the colored people. I think our greatest problem today is juvenile delinquency. We had a lot of trouble with that here. And I have my idea of the only remedy for that is home. 'Course, a lot of them come from broken homes, and some of them come from homes that had no Christian training at all. And we've got to keep the faith of our fathers. We have, our world has developed scientifically. It's wonderful and it should, but spirituality should have developed right along with it, should be on equal standing. I think it was \*\_\_\_\_\_, wasn't that said, when people relied on God we would do more in one generation, develop even scientifically more, than we do in three now: He had a few things to govern it by. You know, we're dual. There's two parts, and if both the spiritual and the mental are not developed, we're lopsided. So I think that is one thing that our children haven't had the spiritual training probably. They- but I feel sorry for them in a way because they have ten temptations while I had one. But there's a way of beating those, don't you see? And I believe that God is the only- that's the only thing in my

understanding. But I feel just a great, great future for Diboll, because I believe that there's Christian men and women that are connected with this company to go on and this will always be a wonderful place.

Mr. Arthur Temple's mother, whose husband passed away about a little over a year ago, has given all her life to doing just the things I do, only she did it in a bigger way. She was able to. She hasn't given her life to society at all; it's for reaching down and lifting up. She is one of the most wonderful women I have ever been associated with. She's done more good in the world than any one woman I know of. She'd hear of someone that's crippled; she'd go and see what could be done for them. If they needed food and clothes, she'd go and see what could be done and they got things they needed. And so you see, that's the background. It's handed down. Mr. Arthur Temple was Mr. Arthur the first; this is Mr. Arthur the second, and he has a son, the third. But he's so noble, so wonderful.

I've never been too much interested in the value of material things. I have a few letters that are to be my treasures. I have one that Mr. Arthur wrote me after I left the store- and I have some from Mr. Tom Temple, and a few of my other friends- that are worth more to me than if I had a million dollars. Those things can never die. I've never tried to save money. I don't have any money, but I have things that money can't buy. Before the First World War, let's see, we had the school. How it's grown! And we had the growth of the churches. We had one little church, you know, and now I think we have seven churches.

**JL:** And the school originally had two rooms? And then it was burnt down and ....?

**FF:** First they had a two-room school house; then four rooms. Now I can't tell you how many we have now. We have a graduating class here from, I guess I'd say twenty to twenty-five now. And in 1922 was the first accredited class in our high school. My son happened to be in that class. Did you see him in the homecoming paper?

**JL:** No.

**FF:** Well, it has lots of news in there that might be interesting. But we've always had a good athletic director here and our boys have always played. We've had outstanding baseball and football and basketball, and of course, that means lots. That means lots to a school too. And we've had splendid instructors here.

**JL:** You were going to say how the hospital grew. What did you have then when you first came?

**FF:** Oh, we had one room, I think. One little office room; it was an old building. This building is practically new, but it was one little office room. But we had two doctors and they were perfectly wonderful and they- both of them are living. One of them is in Beaumont; he was the doctor of the year last year, in that district. But he's operated on tables, and I have to tell you, we didn't have a nurse then, and I helped the doctor. In those days - now I couldn't do it because I couldn't give ether, but I gave ether.

**JL:** You said you got the first picture show about...?

**FF:** Hardy Cook ran the first picture show and then he sold out to Mr. \*\_\_\_\_\_, Mr. Farrington and Mr. \*\_\_\_\_\_.

**JL:** When did the first picture show come?

**FF:** Now let me see. It must be about thirty-five, thirty-seven years ago.

**JL:** Was that always an uplifting experience?

**FF:** No, not always. We had \*\_\_\_\_\_ down there, Broadway and all those, but it was – they had lots of good pictures. We had just as we do today. We have some very wonderful pictures and very helpful pictures in every way and some of them are very degrading.

**JL:** I wonder if we could get back again into that early period, because I am interested in getting the things that especially will be interesting to the Temple people now because another generation is coming up to fill in those \*\_\_\_\_\_.

**FF:** There's a few things, but I wouldn't say, because, I'm sure I know more about the Temple family than anybody, because I have known Mr. Tom Temple for at least 55 years. And the boys used to have a poker club here – Mr. Farrington, Mr. Henry Temple, and the Rutland's and all. Mr. Tom Temple, he didn't especially like that, but anyhow one night they were over at our house playing poker. Mr. Temple and I visited in the living room, but he was opposed to everything like that, and he was very much opposed to any kind of liquor.

**JL:** This was Mr. Tom Temple?

**FF:** Mr. Tom Temple, that's the founder of this mill. He was the founder. Did you know that's the reason that it's grown: Without the right foundation it can't grow. But, now I don't know, the mill probably was...

**JL:** I hope you don't leave off that story that you were telling about over at your house.

\*See footnote on page 4

**FF:** Oh, you're not going to put that in Mr. \*\_\_\_\_\_, who is the general manager; Mr. E. C. Durham, who was Manager of the T. and SE Railroad; Mr. Bud Rutland, William Rutland, who was manager of the store; and Mr. Ernest Rutland was the hardwood man; and my husband was postmaster. Oh, I wanted to tell you about how that grew too. They had a little poker club, five cent ante, and it didn't make any difference, they just loved to play poker just you would like bridge. I'm not one of those narrow kind that feel like ever time you turn around the Lord is writing something down to punish you for, or the devil is waiting for you. I think God made everything good, and I think that there wasn't



a bit of harm in the world the way those boys, they didn't anyone lose or anything, they just had a happy evening together, about every two weeks or so. But I never did. It grows on some people, just like liquor. You know, years ago our parents always had punch and eggnog and things for Christmas, but they didn't drink, and they didn't get drunk. But Americans now, you know, can't stand this life like they did. They lost something in there; I don't know what it was. Why our preachers, the ones that rode horseback from one church to another, maybe twenty-five miles or so, they'd go in and visit a home and if the weather was cold they'd fix them a hot-toddy and they didn't think any more of it than we do drinking coffee now. But you see, they could do it then, we just can't do it now.

We didn't have an undertaker in those days, but one at Lufkin, Mr. Humeson, and he would need help when he'd come. I've also helped him make the incision and all, and I helped, you know they pump the fluid in the veins and I helped him several times. And then after he – I don't know whether Mr. Humeson died – but the father is dead; the boys are still in business. But I've worked with him with people that he had charge of the funerals. And we made, being in the store, of course, materials were bought there and we'd make most all the...

**JL:** You'd sew the things?

**FF:** Yes, and made those. And lots of people felt like that they just were timid about handling dead people. We know that this is just a house we live in, and after the spirit's gone we shouldn't worry about this body any more. So I never allowed those things to affect me in any way because that was just business; the spirit had already gone back to its Maker, and that was just the house they lived in. So I worked; I'd help the undertaker, and then I'd help the doctor. I've helped with operations. We had two that were operated in my house, in my living room. We turned it into – moved a bed in there and kept the patient in there for two weeks until he was able to care for himself.

**JL:** That was before you had a hospital?

**FF:** That was before we had the hospital. And then, you know, we have a lovely clinic now. Then the next hospital they had, they rented the old house down on the second row down here. They had probably four rooms, and then they were able to do their work. Then we got a nurse, Miss Fulcrod, when Mr. Walker was superintendent. That must be twenty—my husband's been dead twenty-seven years—and this nurse was here at the time he died and would come over so often. We had a nurse then, Miss Fulcrod, who came and worked with the doctors, and the company paid her. Then she did a lot of the work that I had been doing before. She got out then and worked with the people, the poor people. The company paid her and then she went wherever she was needed to help.

**JL:** In other words, you were in the early period before someone officially took over some things, and you would be doing these things?

**FF:** But now, that was the hospital. And then after, I think this little clinic that we have here was built during Mr. Henry Temple's – we have a lovely clinic here now. But

we've had a nurse, the company hired a nurse, for at least thirty years. Before that time, if there was a nurse needed, if there was a real sick person in town and they didn't have five cents, they had a nurse and the company paid it.

During the panic – '29 wasn't it – money was scarce. Man, I've seen men that would be glad to get a dollar a day if they could get work. I've looked into faces of children that were hungry and I've wrapped them about with old coats sometimes somebody'd bring in – we had a box of clothes – to keep them from freezing; it was the only way. One day our manager, I went to him and I said, "I just don't know. I don't believe I can stand this any longer. There's a man over there and he's barefooted and it's cold. He's come to me and asked me what to do" I said, "Of course, I don't have money of that kind. What do you want me to do?" The tears rolled down his cheeks and he said, "Tell them to give him shoes." And the company had all this background, you know. They had all this timber and all, but you couldn't get hold of money. And they were not getting orders, but the salaried people all I guess got the same, I don't remember, but the company gave them a percent. They held the money in the office there and gave them a percent, paid them a percent. I don't remember what it was, and the people that had money helped in that way and they got through.

You live some of things over again because they were wonderful, too. But I remember the baseball. That ought to be interesting to them. I've seen Mr. Henry Temple and the men went to Lufkin to play and they played thirteen innings and Lufkin won in the thirteenth inning just by a little, and of course, it brought tears to all the men's eyes as they come back from that game.

Hotel, we used to have two hotels, one they called the Beanery and then the one across the street where the office crews were.

**JL:** The Beanery was for the workers?

**FF:** For the workers, and it wasn't that the company felt that they were better in any way than the men, but the working man didn't dress, don't you see. They had to be in their working clothes and they didn't feel at home with the others, because it wasn't with the company that the officials had any of that feeling. That feeling never has existed here. It's been a man for man. It's been what you are. It didn't make any difference if you were a ditch digger, if you were the right kind of a man you were just – they never had any idea of being high. They proved their bigness and their greatness by having that spirit.

**JL:** The Beanery, how was that set up? Would the men eat there who didn't go home for lunch, for instance?

**FF:** Those who didn't go home for lunch and men who worked out, some of them might have been ditch diggers; some might have been workers in certain parts of the mill – young men that didn't have a home here, you see. And at this other hotel, they called it the Pigeon, but there were very lovely people that always run that. And some of the finest people that I know of came from the family that run that Beanery.

**JL:** And did they charge them so much for each meal?

**FF:** They paid so much a month. You know what I paid for a board – we boarded two years over at the \*\_\_\_\_\_ Hotel, at sixteen dollars a month.

**JL:** Sixteen dollars a month for two people?

**FF:** No, no, sixteen each. But just think of that – a room, room and board, and we didn't have but one bath in the hotel.

**JL:** And what about the food, was it pretty good?

**FF:** Food was splendid.

**JL:** What for example? In what way?

**FF:** Well, the first morning – we landed about 4 o'clock first morning we landed here, and of course it was almost breakfast time. We had no room at the time and we had hot biscuits, broiled steak, coffee and some kind of dessert, fruit – we had a lovely breakfast. And the boy that is janitor here, his mother was cook, and she served the first breakfast that I had here.

**JL:** Was that a very special breakfast?

**FF:** No, that was our regular.

Mr. Tom Temple, he used to bring a group of his friends from Texarkana down here, probably twice a year – always in the fall – and they had tennis. We had a tennis court over here. And while he was here they would all play, he loved bridge, Mr. Temple loved bridge. So they all played bridge and we had at one time, in the earlier part of my coming here, they built what they called the Club House. They had a reading room on the lower floor, and Mr. Temple furnished a lovely bookcase with all kinds of books and different magazines. It had three bathes so that the men could go and get their – anybody could go there – and then on the other side they had a billiard table and that was for recreation, don't you see: He was always planning to do something for his people. And he had a man over there, an attendant, and I had charge of the library. I had to see that it was properly cared for. We had that building – it was called a library- for about four, five years, but it got to where there was a group that would go there and meet and they didn't take care of the place. It wasn't giving the results that Mr. Temple had hoped that it would, so they turned the library, the books over to the school, and then they made that into a living room. So when Mr. Temple came down with his party it was his living room. And he always had his private room upstairs. And they had five rooms up there and different young men that were working for the company lived up there. But it was always a great time when he'd bring his party down, because everybody enjoyed – different ones would have dinner parties and things for them. \*\_\_\_\_\_ was a little boy, he was a baby then, he was about two, three years old. His mother would often come down with the party. I have a group of pictures of part of that party but that was another thing that was upbuilding for the people, planning for the people. Mr. Temple –

by furnishing them, the men- a place to go for an evening – there was reading matter; if they wanted games, there was the billiard table. And I really think the reason he had that stopped, they paid so much to the play, and I think they kind of got the bets up a little bit. And I don't think he approved of that.

**JL:** Just to go back for a minute to the time when you boarded at the hotel. What did the other meals consist of? We talked about breakfast.

**FF:** Oh, we had delicious meals. Of course, they had, we had – the lady that run the hotel certainly knew her business. She gave us probably three vegetables and a dessert and a salad and a choice of drinks.

**JL:** Three vegetables and a salad. At that time, you know, people didn't eat salads.

**FF:** Well, she always served, probably it would be lettuce and tomatoes probably it would be celery, or it would be something – and congealed salads, and lots of times she would make those good old country fried pies. That would be our dessert sometimes – she furnished lovely meals.

**JL:** Did you have electricity then?

**FF:** Yes, oh yes, we had it – we had the light. The hotel had it and a few of the homes.

**JL:** What kind of a stove did she have, do you remember?

**FF:** Wood.

**JL:** In the kitchen?

**FF:** In the kitchen. Large kitchen range, wood stove. So I guess \*\_\_\_\_\_. There was only one other one that was made at that time. But that was wood. But later on they improved that hotel, put in another bath and I think by that time they used gas. I don't know if they had gas before we had electric stoves; I guess we used wood stoves until we had electric stoves. We didn't have gas at that time. I know we didn't; it was wood. Had a wood stove in every room.

**JL:** A wood stove in every room?

**FF:** That's right. That was just at the hotel. And then they built a little inn up here with logs. That was very unusual when they built that. It was built by people who understood the hotel business and it was very beautiful.

**JL:** Not by the company?

**FF:** Yes, the company built it but this other man had built one in some other state somewhere and everybody – people come from miles to be there. And it's still

interesting, however it's rotting down now. It just seems like they can't get anyone now to run it. We have that hotel and then Mr. Arthur, since he's been here of course, \*\_\_\_\_\_. We have a park now. After World War I, Mr. Booker of Lufkin, who was engineer here, drew plans for a park so that children might have – that was when they began, when the government was giving the men work, you know— WPA. Anyhow we had hoped to have a park for the children. Some of them felt that the – guess that was the stockholders – felt that the company might have to pay right much on it, but they wouldn't have had to - \*\_\_\_\_\_ government, you know. And everything would have come at cost, but anyhow that fell through. We didn't get the park until a couple of years ago. But that was planned after World War I.

When the Armistice was signed I was cleaning house, and Mr. Farrington rushed in and grabbed his gun. I thought there was something terrible happening. I said, "what on earth!" He said, "The Armistice was signed!" And the men got their guns and anything that would make a noise, whistles all blew and it certainly was a day of rejoicing.

Back years ago, earlier, of course, they were very much interested in politics and I think parties were working on it more than they are now. I think the Democrats were just a little bit more opposed to the Republicans and the Republicans just a little more opposed to the Democrats.

**JL:** Did you have any political activity?

**FF:** Oh, did we! And then when they – before they would have their election, they would have bonfires and men would haul wood and have a bonfire, a great celebration, and then afterwards they had another one. Sometimes it would be the opposite party. Then when they'd have the second one, maybe the first ones wouldn't come out. Some of those men that were so active and all that passed away.

**JL:** Was most of the excitement about local elections or presidential elections?

**FF:** Both. Then the state- state elections- I think probably state elections more than anything else.

**JL:** What kind of activity would be going on instead of the bonfire?

**FF:** Well, just posters and things of that kind, you know – what we have today. I think if it would be for a governor's race the posters would be put out by the parties running, and they'd have speaking. Senator Knox used to come here and make...

**JL:** Do any of these campaigns stand out in your mind – any particular one?

**FF:** I think the one that stands out most was when the flour salesman ran for governor and won by such a big majority, O'Daniels. Govenor O'Daniels was a flour salesman but he was – he lived in Fort Worth – but he was a splendid citizen. He didn't have money. I don't think he even had a college education, but he was a splendid citizen in Fort Worth. He had made a success with his hillbilly band advertising flour, and he just

won the hearts of the people all over the state, with this band, and for the stand that he did. He was always in sympathy with those who were in sorrow, no matter if the sorrow was caused by a criminal or someone that's being electrocuted, and he wrote beautiful poems. He wrote the song which was accepted as the Texas song, "Beautiful, Beautiful Texas." And he was just loved by people because of the stand that he had. And he won by such a great majority, but you know, he was condemned and criticized and almost impeached after he got in office. But at the same time I think that Governor O'Daniels was perfectly honest, and I think that there always has been some corruption in our politics, just the same as we are having today.

**JL:** Of course, this was fairly recent, wasn't it? This was within the last ten years or so, wasn't it?

**FF:** Oh, yes. But you want to go way back?

**JL:** If you can remember anything.

**FF:** Way back the only thing I can remember about would be when Joe Bailey from Texarkana – I think he was a senator – and I know they were all very much interested in that, and then is when we had a lot of those bonfires and so forth with the men coming to talk, make speeches for us. Joseph \*\_\_\_\_\_ Bailey. But I've always been interested in our county elections and all that and I think most of them have. I think our people taken as a party are Republicans. I think most of them are. But I just don't know of anything special – only just as we find it everywhere. Oh, and during the First World War the library that I told you about, where we had the reading room and so forth, it was turned into a Red Cross sewing room. And our ladies, nearly every lady in town that could sew, worked and knitted. I know that I was on the packing committee of a lot of things. And Mr. Rutland who was in the store – when I had a girl to help me, he'd let me go over now and then to the sewing room. And then they had the men at the mill give some \$.25 a month, some \$.50 a month and some \$1.00 a month, just as they felt that they could, and once a month that was collected and sent to the Red Cross headquarters. And they acknowledged it with a telegram from Washington, which was put up here. I think the town was very proud of their work here in the Red Cross during World War I.

**JL:** Can you think of any other ways World War I influenced the life in Diboll?

**FF:** Oh bonds, selling bonds. Our Diboll was wonderful the way the people – I think they just put everything in bonds that they possibly could – all that they could possibly spare above a living. I know my boy was a Scout, and the Scouts had offered – I think he got a laurel wreath, no, three palm leaved on a badge – for selling I don't know how many, but of course it was through his friends at the offices that he sold all those. But the people here were very liberal. They did a lot. And everything has been so good, not only for our own community, but for the world's good, that could be done I think has been done by this company. As far as I know in the fifty years that I've been here.

**JL:** Did the war take many people out of the community?

**FF:** Yes, we lost some of our fine boys in both wars, both World War I and II.

We had the first Ford car and we had a little family trouble when it came in, but I told Mr. [Farrington?], we are not able to have a car. And he said that car will pay for itself and we will have the joy of using it. So we bought the Ford car and sure enough, he used it for a transportation car, you know, for bringing salesmen from Lufkin to Diboll back to Lufkin. That car really did pay for itself. It was the first car here. It was a Ford – I guess the T-model. Wasn't that the first one? Well, I have a picture somewhere – we had a little bridge across from our house, and I don't know whether he was driving the car or whether this boy – he had a boy that drove the car for him – and I think he ran off of the bridge. And it didn't hurt anybody. And another funny thing about a car that we had: Mr. Rutland had a car then too, so Mr. Farrington went hunting and something got the matter with his car and someone came along in and told Mr. Rutland about it. Mr. Rutland brought his car to bring him in, and chained it on the back and thought he was bringing it in, and he got down to the back where our garage was, and he went a little too far, and he went off in the ditch and looked back and he didn't have any car behind him. The chain had broken along the way.

**JL:** How did the people react to the first car?

**FF:** Oh, we had worlds of trouble. Everybody that had a horse was scared to death of it. And we almost had to leave town sometimes because of the farmers would be so up in arms because the horses would get scared and run off of the roads. We'd go – we went to Dallas one time – and we had to take an ax and everything to cut things out of the road sometimes, and if it rained too hard – one time we had to leave our car. We went to market twice a year and we had to leave our car and it had to be sent back by freight. It was quite a thing in those days because the people enjoyed it so much. The children, if they could get to ride in a car, why it was just wonderful. Mr. Chandler's brother made an address at the close of the school year, and he said that years ago the height of his ambition and the thing that he enjoyed most was to get to sit on the fender and then hope that the car would start so that he could get a ride. And he said that he didn't forget the time that he started to crawl under the train and I came out and spanked him for it.

\* \_\_\_\_\_ was shot down here at the station. And I went out and I knew the  
\* \_\_\_\_\_ and the little boys were, their father was killed and it was during the time we had liquor and I went out to the little boys and them home and pled with the brother not to take out his gun, not to do anything rash because it wouldn't bring the other one back and the man that killed him went home then and committed suicide. And then I saw another man shot right up there at the ice house. We used to have things like that happen in town, but we don't have those things any more. But those were all conditions, things that happened in the early part of Diboll.

**JL:** Before the First World War?

**FF:** Yes. But I just don't like to dwell on those bad things because there were so many beautiful things that happened. I'd rather tell you those. It's just been wonderful to see the growth. It makes me so happy now to drive – I don't walk very much, I've been very

ill for two years but I'm getting so I get out now – but to drive over the plant now and see the improvement, it's just the most wonderful....

**END OF INTERVIEW**