

ARTHUR TEMPLE JR.
Interview 56c
January 13, 1988, at Temple Memorial Library
Speaking to Diboll Historical Society

ABSTRACT: Arthur Temple Jr. addresses a meeting of the Diboll Historical Society and discusses a variety of subjects, some old and some new. As in most of his interviews, he gives biographical detail of his family and their relationship to the forest product business and the East Texas community. He discusses with the membership the recent *Cornbread Whistle* oral history project, including successes and his desire to continue recording memories of the past. He provides insight into the process of transitioning the company town of Diboll into a modern city with elected officials and home ownership, and also the process of modernizing and diversifying the industrial physical plant and its products. Personalities discussed include Dred Devereaux, Eddie Farley, Wilbur Fogg, Clyde Thompson, E.C. Durham and the Durham family, and Joe Denman. Also included is some insight into timber buying by the Company and selling of timberland to the federal government during the Great Depression.

Teena Kellam: I'm glad to see all of you here this afternoon for our meeting. I know that there has been quite a bit of interest for getting Mr. Temple to speak to us and he was gracious enough to come. I thought maybe for the convenience of Mr. Temple and some of you, that we would have him speak first and then have our business portion of the meeting after he speaks to us. I left it open to you, sir, what you wanted to speak about. We thought there might be some questions that people might have or you might want to speak about some of your early remembrances of Diboll, just informal.

Arthur Temple: Okay, it has to be informal. I didn't prepare a speech, but I kind of got the idea it would be easy to talk about my favorite subject. It's kind of hard to talk to you because a lot of you know a whole lot more than I do. First, before we get off of the subject, you know, I still say it was the "the biscuit whistle", because when I came to Diboll that's what it was called and I know you ought to know it. When I heard that you said it was the "cornbread whistle", I said, "Well, I give up", and I'll concede it but we all know what it was for anyway.

I don't really know what to talk about. Let me see, thought we would just have some questions at some point and be totally informal. As all of you know, I was born in Texarkana and lived up there. We had our head office in Texarkana for a very simple reason. Back in those days my grandfather owned the whole company practically, except for some stock he had given to a few of the people who came down here with him originally. That's where he wanted to live so that's where the office was. It didn't make a bit of sense in a lot of ways, but in those days all your business was done by correspondence and a little bit by telephone and some by postal telegraph and western union. Some of you can remember postal telegraph. That's not in business any more. That was the same thing as Western Union except a different company, never was as good a company, I might add. But they did all their business by telegram and by letter.

That was really, I think they accomplished just as much as we do today because, at least they had the orders in writing to start with instead of somebody filling out a blank down here and having to write back and get confirmation, so it really worked pretty well. And when they entered the orders, of course, they sent copies down here. The shipping clerk would decide when they could ship it and they would write the customer that. Well, that doesn't interest you so much, but it really wasn't that inefficient back in those days.

Later it became necessary to become a lot more coordinated and, of course, I'm speaking about the company now. You can't separate the company and Diboll, so you forgive me if I'm not talking about the subject that you want.

I started out working in the retail lumber yard. They couldn't make me go where they wanted me to go to school and I was anxious to go to work so I went to work with Temple Lumber Company, who, you recall, was a string of retail lumber yards. They had forty-one of them all over Texas. They said, "From the Red River to the Rio Grande." But that was a pretty grand statement because there were a lot of skips in there. But I started working in Paris, Texas for \$70.00 a month and learned a lot. Had the good experience to work under some of the greatest people that I ever saw and they taught me an awful lot. They taught me in a way that you don't forget. They taught me to keep books and the accounting background I got meant a great deal to me. Then I always wanted to be in Diboll because that's where the action was in the company. But I couldn't get to Diboll because I hadn't been brought up in the saw milling end of it. So I went to work in Paris, Texas, for a retail lumber yard. Then when they decided to build a lumber yard in Lufkin, well, they gave me the break I wanted and let me come close to Diboll. Of course, as you know, Henry Temple and a lot of you were there then, and in 1948 – excuse me, I'll back up – all during the time I was at Temple Lumber Company, which was from '39 to (in Lufkin that is), to '48, I got to know an awful lot of people down here and some of you. Got to know Eddie Farley, Wilbur Fogg, Mr. Lee, Clyde Thompson, Mr. O'Hara was living when I first came here. Mr. Strauss and a great many more that I haven't mentioned. So I really had some kind of a background with Diboll when, in 1948 I had just resigned because – in the meantime I had started some companies of my own, Temple Associates was one of them.

I was getting along pretty good there and I had finally got my pay up to \$135.00 a month, so when Henry Temple died, I had just resigned to go and just run my own business, just about a week. Dad called me and asked – "Would you come to Diboll?" I said, "Dad, no, I don't think I will. I've just got my own companies going and they are all I can tend to". He said, "Well, we are going to pay you \$10,000.00 a year." I said, "Well, that's a little different," because that was a great deal more than I was making. I think I had gotten up to about \$250.00 a month at that time, but it seems to me like I was getting along about as well as I do now, as a matter of fact. I decided to come to Diboll to get that high pay and I was 28 years old now. What in the world they were thinking about to send me down here at the age of 28 to run what was a pretty good size company at that time. By our standards, I don't know, but I never will forget my dad said, "Now, when you go down there, for about a year, I don't want you to do anything of any importance. I want you to work, but I don't want you to go changing things. I want you to listen to Eddie Farley. There are a lot of good old timers down there and they know what they are doing and I want you to listen to them." I did just that, and that was the best advice I ever got and we did have a tremendous bunch of people. Your dad, Lucille

(Sweeny), was here. He didn't work for us – I guess he worked for the TSE, yeah, but it was a wonderful experience and the thing that we put together was – I immediately started hiring some young engineers. I went to A&M and the University of Texas and that's where we got – this was about a year or two later. That's where we got Joe Denman, John Booker, the Musslewhite boy and several others and all of them are old timers now. In fact, Joe Denman, he was just a kid then himself and I wasn't much older. Now I'm 67 and I'm an old timer. There are not many older around here than I am, I mean from point of service. I started working in '37 that would be 51 years ago. So I thought I was a kid right up until the time I retired. Then I woke up to the fact that I was always the oldest guy at the meetings. Then I realized that I was an old timer. There aren't many of them left, but I never will forget how I leaned on Eddie Farley, Wilbur Fogg and all the others to hold this thing together. Clyde Thompson of course. We had something pretty keen, we didn't realize.. we really didn't plan it that way, but the thing that was keen was that we had all the young fellows, fellows like Clyde, Dred Devereaux and a number of others. They didn't think they knew anything and the young fellows knew they didn't know anything. So they were pushing and the others were holding back and between them we did some awfully good things. I've always thought that the best combination you could have is to have a team that has some old experienced people that know everything that the young people could not possibly know and that's really what was very successful.

The thing that worries me about The Cornbread Whistle is there is just not enough in there about so many of the old timers and I could name dozens of them. Some day we have to go back and pick that up and you have to get people to tell the stories that will make it worth printing. I can think of so many things so many times, you know every day at lunch we'd go down to Mrs. Hogue's for lunch, and I'll tell you, when we lost that boarding house, we lost the greatest thing in Diboll. We used to sit out on the front porch before and then Mrs. Hogue would call us to lunch. We called it dinner in those days. We would talk and Dred Devereaux would always have a big bunch of lies to tell. They weren't lies, they were exaggerations.

How many of you knew Dred Devereaux? He was a terrific guy. I will never forget, I could tell a hundred stories about him that he told me sitting on that porch. But one in my mind – we had just started doing project I, which was tearing down all the main part of the mill, the lumber handling facilities in that big shed that is still there. A new kiln, an automatic stacker and sorter and all that sort of stuff. Of course, everybody told my dad. They would call my dad, all the old timers, Ernest Kurth, Joe Kurth would call him up and say, "That young fellow is going to break you. There is no way you can spend that kind of money on a sawmill." Well, we became the most efficient mill in the country and we did the very thing they should have done and that's the reason we are here today.

Let me tell you why that happened. I always wanted ... we were short of timber. We woke up to the fact that, as Dave Kenley used to say...not enough in the book about him either. As Dave said, "Arthur, we have too many shoats and not enough hogs." Meaning that we had too many little trees and not enough big trees. Funny thing, excuse me.., but the funny thing is now they complain because they have too many big trees. And I told them they should someday thank the Lord they have so many big trees because we went through a lot of trouble to save those big trees and cut many a crooked,

sorry expensive logs that we bought on the outside. Some years we didn't have money to speak of, because we were spending it all for timber so we could let ours grow. Well, I got off the subject...

I always wanted to get some more timber so I heard that out on the West Coast they told me if you could show that you have enough employment to make it worthwhile you could go to the federal government and could make a deal with them for so many million feet of timber a year on sustained cut and under certain circumstances they would do it. Well, of course, they weren't doing that generally in those days, and today they mark a tract and mark it for sale and you bid on it and the high bidder gets it. Under the deal I was trying to work out, we would have a fixed price that would be reasonable and we would get 50 million feet of timber a year, but to get it you had to show that you employed so many people and you would provide jobs. That's what the government justified it with. Well, of course, when they told me that I immediately started working on those numbers and we were very inefficient at that time. That was the old mill. We had those old dolly runs and we pushed lumber around. I used to tell Eddie Farley we would pick it up and carry a little piece of lumber around in a basket. It was very inefficient and, as a result, we could show that it would employ a lot of people. I think, in that old mill, we had something like 950 people working and it wasn't nearly as big a production as we have now in the sawmill. When I presented that document to the government, they looked at it and said, "You are so inefficient that you won't be here long enough to cut that timber and we are not going to do it."

Well, they hurt my feelings and then I got to looking around and we were that inefficient. About that time my year of silence was up, so I decided we had to go to work. So I went and hired the best engineering firm I could get and had these guys like Joe Denman on board then, and we drew up and went all over the world, literally all over the world, looking at sawmills and finding out what was the most efficient mill there was at that time and it was immediately successful. It was obvious that we had to do it. Of course, Angelina Lumber Company, Mr. Kurth's mill immediately decided that they were wrong and that we weren't going broke, that maybe they were going to go broke so they immediately went to work and they sort of had a cheap imitation of what we had done. It didn't work as well and they didn't last as long, but from then on we started trying to figure out a way to diversify. That all we were doing was cutting lumber and taking some of the waste and making handles out of it. We did make flooring and a lot of molding and things of that kind, but the next thing we had to do was to diversify, so we wouldn't be dependent only on that one mill which, although it was a big sawmill and we all thought of it as being a big mill, and it did spread all over everything. It really didn't produce that much product.

In those days we may have made, I forget the number, but I would say we made 60 million feet of lumber a year at Diboll. That sounds like a lot, doesn't it? Sixty million feet – well, it is now, that's ...thousand and you sell it by the thousands, so all year long we worked just to make 60 thousand units that we could sell. Well, that means if you spent \$60,000.00 in the course of the year you raised your cost a dollar, didn't you? So it was clear to me we had to do something to get more stuff moving through there so we could spend the money we had to spend. That's when we went into fiberboard. That's when we went into all those other things. We started doing them and that is the best thing we could have done, because then we not only utilized everything

but the squeal of the saw, but we had a lot more production. The fiberboard plant, for instance, makes about 350 million feet of fiberboard a year. Well, 350 million from the waste, essentially the waste of that sawmill that made 60 million feet a year. So, with the by-products, we then had 60 million plus 350 million which is 410 million units to sell, and so on.

Then we spread out beyond Diboll. We merged with Pineland. We did the same thing at Pineland that we did here. Modernized it. Incidentally we tore down everything they had over there, one piece at a time, and built new and today when I go over there not a damn one, excuse me, not a damn one of those new mills that I built is still standing. They have all been replaced again which means you have to keep changing. You just can't fall in love with them. That's all there is to it. You just have to keep changing. And, of course, this mill had been rebuilt, not just at the time of the fire, but they just finished rebuilding. Everything is done by computer now.

Well, so much for that, the thing that is interesting about Diboll – let me just add this – when I first came to Diboll, I'll never forget, I looked at the financial statement and there were a couple of things. The first one was, our total sales for a year, total sales for Southern Pine Lumber Company were three million dollars plus a few. Today they are about five times that, no, about five hundred times that, they are almost a billion and a half dollars. Of course, they are made not only in these plants, but the plants all around the country and even some overseas. We don't have much overseas, but we have a little plant in Japan that makes tol oil, which is a by-product from the paper mills. We have a box plant in the Canary Islands which is off the coast of Africa, and it is a good plant, incidentally. Then we have one down in Puerto Rico that makes paper boxes, but out of this little mill that's what grew and it now has sales about a billion and a half dollars a year, employs close to thirty thousand people, all told. Of course, the big end of the business today, and it kind of hurts my feelings to say it, but the big end of the business today is the paper and paper box companies. That's Inland Container, the other half of Temple-Inland. We bought that while we were part of Time and when they spun us off, out of Time, and all of you remember that, we talked them into letting us take that with us and that was a great thing because those paper mills are just doing great. I don't know what is coming this year, but last year was a humdinger and they made a lot of money.

The things that make the company great are the people and I can't talk about it...it's so silly...I can't talk about them very well. And one reason I came down here...I want to see if I can learn to do it. I want to learn to talk about them without crying. Eddie Farley, I guess, was just like a father to me, and absolutely the best thing you ever saw in your life. He knew his business, front and back. I never will forget, I know you think I am silly, but I can't help it. Actually he is the one that talked me into marrying Lottie, which is the best thing I ever did. You remember Wilbur Fogg? What a sawmill man he was! He used to have a saying... they would say "Wilbur, can you saw on a circular rig?" and Wilbur's standard answer was...you know we have band rigs... "Arthur, I can saw on anything that will cut a log up just so long as it is under a roof in a sawmill." I will never forget that. Of course, Wilbur became Eddie's right hand man. He was a sawyer, the best one that ever lived, I guess, but hethen he became Eddie Farley's right hand man and he was sort of... I guess his title was "assistant superintendent". And he couldn't stay away from that sawmill when they were doing

some work up there, making some adjustments, and those of you who have been here know that he fell into the band saw and was cut half in two...it was a terrible thing.

Dred Devereaux, as they say, would... would use a 4 X 4 if a 2 X 4 would do. And he said, "I know, Arthur, it is expensive, but it is hell for stout." I never will forget, when he was building stuff. When I was up in the lumber yard in Lufkin and they were building stuff down here, they were doing little small stuff. Every time they would go to pour some concrete... he had a couple of colored gentlemen a hose and mortar box...and they would mix the concrete by hand. That's the only way they mixed it. So one time when I was down here I said, "Let me get you a 3 ½ s concrete mixer and put it down here. It will save you a lot of money." So Henry Temple finally agreed to do it and it just nearly killed him because it cost about \$800.00, I think. That was a great blessing to Dred Devereaux, but I never will forget... It was mounted on rubber tires and you pulled it around behind the pick-up and set it up wherever you wanted to go and set down some feet and started pouring. But the first thing Dred did, he was so proud of it, he went out there and built a shed over it, a permanent shed. He had columns this big. It would sit in this corner just fine and built that shed over it and I never could understand, but that was typical of old Dred. Dred was a terrific guy. Did most of you know Dred? I know some of you did.

Pate Warner: I worked with him.

AT: Did you? Oh Lord, have mercy on you. The story they have in "The Cornbread Whistle" about Doug Warner being up on the roof. That is a true story, but there were a hundred thousand others just as good. You know, if you got him started, he would tell you how he built that river bridge out there. Did you work on that bridge? He built that river bridge out there and there were thirty or forty stories like that. I just wish all of those stories. Clyde could have told you most of them. Maybe he did, maybe it is on some of his recordings. When did we make those first recordings?

Marie Davis: In the fifties... with the Texas Forestry Association.

AT: In the fifties...yeah, but before that we made some with a little wire recorder.

MD: We don't have the ...the tapes, just the transcripts.

AT: I was scared that everybody would die and we wouldn't have them and I knew they would be worth something to us later on. That's the reason that those of us who remain, I hope, will get busy and record every silly little story we can think of, because it will mean something to somebody some day.

Julia Schinke: Arthur, I don't mean to interrupt but, talking about Dred Devereaux, when they were tearing down what was left of the mill after the fire, I forget who I was talking to, but anyway, they said they were having trouble, I guess it was piling. Would that be right? They were having trouble getting it up and I said, "If Dred Devereaux put those down, they will have to have an explosion to get them up." And sure enough they did.

AT: I was sitting on that porch one morning at Mrs. Hogue's. One day at noon with Dred and we had just hired Joe and them and started that project. The big Number One Project, building the sorters and all that sort of stuff, and Dred wasn't much in favor of what we were doing. He thought he could have gone out and done it just fine without all these engineers. We were sitting there and these cars would go by and turn into the mill...turn into the mill. I said, "Dred, what do you honestly think of what we are doing?"

He said, "Arthur, I don't believe it is worth a damn. You want to know what I think? You got those young fellows and they are going to break this damn company. You asked me and I told you." That's what he thought, but later, he was one of the best supporters we had on that.

I wish somebody had gotten the recipe for Mrs. Hogue's brown gravy. Do you remember her brown gravy? Every day old Hamp Byerly would come in there and we would try to fix it so he would have to sit in the middle and you know what happens to the guy in the middle. He doesn't get to eat. So he got to sitting at a separate table. He would come in late making an excuse and he got to sitting at a separate table. Hamp had some great stories, too. I wish I could remember all of them.

Let me see, I'll just ramble on here.... Is there anything you would like for me to talk about, or would you like to talk about something?

Marie Davis: You are doing fine.

AT: Well, I'm just talking.

Pate Warner: Would you have ever made it if you had just used lumber alone? Would you have made it?

AT: If we had just kept the sawmill and nothing else? No, well, we would have been a little old...No, we wouldn't have made it. I'll tell you, the thing that worried me the most when I came down here – I don't know if it was the most – There were a lot of things that worried me, but when I came here we were paying \$0.40 an hour and the Papermill, I think, was paying about \$2.25. It was a hell of a lot more than we were paying and it really worried me. We gradually got it up. I remember when we went to \$0.75, we did that before it was necessary and everything because I knew everybody was having a hard time and everybody thought that was going to break the company, but it didn't.

I'll have to say this – everybody worked hard and everybody pitched in and it didn't cost a darn thing. Then we went on up. Now we pay just about as well as the Papermill does, I think.... I'm sure. We have the best fringe benefits of anybody I know of, which is a big item. Most people don't know it, but for every dollar we spend on wages, we spend \$0.40 for fringe benefits, that's almost half. You know, that's hospitalization, etc. Of course, in the old days, I'm not sure it wasn't better, we had the company doctor, and I think, if you were a single man, you paid \$0.55 a month and if you had a family, you paid \$1.25. I guess it changed at various times, and that worked pretty good, but I used to shock all my conservative friends by saying that we practiced

socialized medicine in Diboll, which we did, and all in all, it was pretty good, but it had to stop and I'll tell you why it had to stop. It wasn't anything real... Dr. Dale was here then and there was an attitude to call out the doctor for just any and everything. Like any other human being, Dr. Dale got tired of it, so occasionally he would just refuse to go. I imagine it was more than occasionally. I remember one night, one of the people who had been bad about calling him... he was a hypochondriac... he called him out one night and he was sick and died. That's when we decided something had to be done about that. So that was the passing of a great day... I'd like to see medical bills like that today.

I remember Dr. Clem, incidentally Dr. Clem just left my office... You remember him, don't you, a lot of you? Best doctor that ever lived, I think, but he delivered my daughter, did all the prenatal care when my daughter was born, delivered her and I think, all of the post-natal care and the whole bill was \$35.00. That was what he charged. I think today, a charity case, the county pays the doctor \$800.00 just for a charity case which doesn't include much of anything.

Somebody get me started again... What else is there to talk about?

Julia Schinke: Well, you remember Watson Walker, of course?

AT: I remember him fairly well. I remember his wife a lot better, but I used to have dinner with them a lot, but I don't remember Watson. Watson wasn't in the house very much. He was out on the plant, etc.

Julia Schinke: Anyway, Papa was the superintendent. But Anyway, my brother who graduated from A&M and then went to World War I and was sent to work for General Electric. Then they transferred him to Houston. He came up and did part of – just dynamos, all that. He was talking... He asked Mr. Walker, "Mr. Walker, why don't you, in this big house you are building, why don't you put in good brick foundation instead of the way you are doing?" He said, "Well, Diboll won't be here that long".

AT: Yes, I know, when I decided that this would never be a town if the company owned all the houses and the people never would come out and do what they were capable of doing. Hell, everybody had a lot of ability but, you know, if somebody wanted to repaper their house they had to come and ask Henry Temple and they would start coming and asking me to repaper the room. And we had houses we were renting for \$8.00 a month and \$5.00 a month and they would want us to spend \$500.00 to fix up another room on it so that daughter could come back and live there. Heck, you couldn't get there from here. On top of that, the people in Diboll, probably wanted to, but they weren't really taking much responsibility for the town, and they were perfectly capable of doing it. So the first thing we did was to decide to sell all the houses. We gave a lot of them away, and we sold them for various little, practically nothing, and I guess in most cases, financed them. Then I put in that subdivision down where Shep lives – the Farley Addition. I never will forget, everybody wanted to live on the highway... I couldn't sell any of the lots, the lots were \$500.00. The best ones were \$500.00 and others were \$350.00. The trees on them were worth more than that, and everybody wanted to live on the highway. Well, I had been building houses up in Texarkana and all over the country and nobody, in their right mind, would want to live on a busy highway. The worst place you can be, in my opinion.

But I couldn't get anybody to buy. So finally Lottie built that house where she lived. It's right next to the one that Joe Denman had, you know? She was the first one that built back in the woods there. They thought that was just something, to live back in the woods, and everybody wanted to be as close to the sawmill as they could be because there weren't really many cars then.

Lucille Sweeny: We lived by the railroad track.

Julia Schinke: That was known as Silk Stocking Row.

AT: Yes, I spent many a night in that old library. They called it a library, but really it was just where Dad and my Grandfather used to stay when they came down here. There may have been some books in it at one time. But I would sleep up there in that room, and it was pretty nice, it was all right. That... that train could come through at night and the sawmill at the back behind you, and I'm telling you, you would have to stay there about a week before you could get any sleep. It was something.

Julia Schinke: Along that line, I laughed at Ann, my daughter, when she first moved to Dallas, she lived near Love Field, and of course, I would go out by the pool a lot and the planes and traffic, you know. I said, "Ann, how do you stand this?" And she said, "Mother, you ask me that when I was born on a railroad track and a planer mill?"

AT: But you know, I live along the railroad track down there now and I don't ever hear it. But I was thinking about E. C. Durham, and that was a name that wasn't mentioned in the book. Incidentally, Temple Webber wasn't mentioned in there to speak of. We weren't really fair with that. But E. C. Durham, I've got one story about him, most of you know it, I think, but I've got to tell it anyway, I want to hear it again myself. There was a ... I don't think it was Professor Jackson, but somebody, there was an old darkie that worked for the TSE Railroad, which Mr. Durham ran. I guess you all know that, and he worked about a week and came in and said he wanted to quit. Mr. Durham said, "Well, John, when you came here and asked me for a job you said you wanted to go to work." He said, "I know, but it's too hard, Mr. Durham." Mr. Durham said, "Well, you said you wanted to work." He said, "Mr. Durham, if I came up and asked you for a drink of water, you wouldn't turn the fire hose on me, would you?" That's one of my favorite stories.

Did some of you know E. C. Durham? I figured you did. You might not have known this, but I did. In fact, I got to thinking about it, because I used to lie up there in bed over the apartment, I'd go to bed pretty early because there wasn't anything for me to do, and E. C. Durham lived right across the track, directly across from me. Lura Durham was as pretty as a speckled pup. She was the prettiest thing you ever saw when she was young, and she could really play a piano. And in the summer all the windows were open, you know there wasn't any air conditioning. I'd lay over there and listen to her play that piano and then I got to thinking about E. C. Durham. He got rich. He had been head of the railroad over there, and I don't imagine he made much money there. I got to be real good friends with E. C. Durham later while I was living in Lufkin. Do you know how he got rich?

Julia Schinke: Oil, wasn't it?

AT: Do you know how he got oil? He had an old darkie that worked for him and his family, really he worked for his mother and father. The old darkie died and left E. C. Durham about forty acres, the only thing he had, up in East Texas and it was right slap dab in the middle of that oil field and that's where E. C. got that money.

Julia Schinke: That was the guy... that's his son that has "The Family Affair".....

AT: No, that's E. C. Williams.... I don't know. Well, E. C. is going to come see me in a few days and I'll find out, but I don't much think it was. This was up at Longview where the family lived. But that's how E. C. got so rich and he was richer than anybody for a long time.

Vivian Warner: This E. C. you are speaking of was the son of Robert Williams, wasn't he?

AT: Yes, that's right. And Robert was great.

Vivian Warner: And this other one that you were thinking of, I think his name was "Doc Little" that worked here. Is he the one that would pick up the mail? Anyway, there was a black man named Doc Little.

AT: You mean that was the one who said you wouldn't turn the fire hose on me? The one that gave E. C. Durham the land worked for his mother and father up in Longview or somewhere in East Texas. He wasn't from Diboll.

Lucille Sweeny: Doc Little worked for the TSE before Professor Jackson. He was the one who didn't want the hose turned on him.

AT: Could be. Well, I'm taking too long, am I not? No.

Pate Warner: Jake and Edwin Durham were two of the smartest boys that ever came to Diboll.

AT: And Lura, too, all three were just brilliant and all three drank themselves to death. It was in the family. Mrs. Durham was a "Webber" and she was a sister to Temple Webber's mother, I mean father, George Webber and Linnie Belle Anthony. There is nothing in there about Ben Anthony. Ben Anthony's wife, Linnie Belle, who lived here for quite a while when she died.... She was a sister to E. C. 's wife and she was the only one, to the best of my knowledge, that liquor really didn't destroy. It ran in the family, you know. Temple had a problem with drinking, it never got him, but he had a terrible time with liquor, and it was just in them. It is hereditary to some people I guess.

Julia Schinke: You were talking about Lura being so pretty. I can remember Mama saying that Mrs. Durham, Lura's mother, was one of the prettiest women she had ever seen.

AT: Oh well, those Webber girls were beautiful girls. They would talk in Texarkana how beautiful they were. I was sweet on Lura in those days when we were just little kids. She came through Texarkana on a train going up to visit her cousin, Gilbert Wilson. Do you remember Gilbert? I brought him down here, he went that way, too. I guess I was 14 or 13, and I went down and bought a \$5.00 box of chocolate candy and took it to her and when the train stopped in Texarkana and I visited with her there and gave her the box of candy. Gilbert told me later she took it and gave it to all the boys at school. But, I'll tell you what, they were remarkable people. I've never known a brighter guy than Jake Durham, and just destroyed himself, all of them.

Franklin Weeks: Didn't Mr. Durham and those boys, perhaps, stay at the Angelina Hotel during the closing days? I recall that...

AT: Room 751.

Franklin Weeks: I used to see those boys outside and you could tell they were just about under the influence of liquor, they could hardly stand up.

AT: I'll tell you how I knew where it was. Older people were always close friends of mine. In fact, my first wife, Mary, once said to me, "You are going to regret it. All of your close friends are old and when they are all gone, you are going to be lonesome." And she was about half right. But I used to go up to E.C.'s room in the afternoon. We'd get through with our work pretty early and go up there. Arch Hollingsworth and we would go there. Carl Dupee had a bunch of race horses and we would pick up the phone and call the bookie in Houston and bet on the races. Carl Dupee knew pretty well when his horses were going to win, and you just wouldn't believe how lucky we were. A lot of times the bookie would let us stay on the line and he would hold it up by the loud speaker, he had some kind of private wire out to the race track, and would hold it up there and we would listen to the race over the telephone. Now you can watch it on TV. Carl Dupee was a great friend of mine, too.

Herbert Weeks: Mr. Durham gave about all the commencement addresses over here at the school.

AT: I'll bet they were good, too. He was a brilliant man, terrific. And, of course, Joe Stegall, who used to work with me out at the redi-mix plant in Lufkin, his daddy was superintendent of the schools here.

But you know what we need to do? We need to call back through our memories and say, "Who haven't we covered in this book?" Because you know... I guess this is about all you could get in one book and you have to lay the frame-work for it and we have that and the history is pretty well in place and the perfunctory recognition. But there are so many people who were really left out... George Smith, Calvin Lawrence, Mr.

Agee, and of course, there was a good bit in there about Lefty Vaughn. But there were a lot of things to talk about besides his baseball.

I never will forget, I used to go in there... when I came down here with Dad, I guess I was six years old, and I'd spend my time walking those tracks, just balancing on them. Scared to death some of those tough sawmill boys would come whip me, but none of them did. I'd go in the store and I'd buy a package of crackers and dimes worth of wieners. I think you got five wieners for a dime in those days and I guess they must be partly cooked because they never did hurt me, I'd eat them raw. I never will forget, I loved that.

Marie Davis: We have a lot of good stories in our transcripts, in the archives that were not in the book.

AT: What we ought to do, I think... Mrs. Farrington, you could write two books on her.

Herbert Weeks: Have you seen the Trinity County book that they have out? It's much larger than ours, costs about \$45.00 and it is written by family members. They wrote it and sent it in.

AT: I've seen some of them done that way.

Herbert Weeks: It really is nice. My wife has one of them.

AT: I'll tell you what we ought to do. We ought to just comb our memories, not only for stories, but for the names of people that haven't been fully revealed, or explored, and then we ought to take everything you've already got and get it in form without necessarily trying to make a book out of it, but just get it where various people could easily read it and add to it and change and, maybe, let that be sort of a treasure chest. And we could use for the next... I know it is virtually what you did this time, but there is so much more. I know there is just so much more.

Marie Davis: While we were doing the interviews, many of the people died before we could get to them.

AT: I know it.

Julia Schinke: I was trying to think of the first manager and the only name that ever came to mind, was a Mr. Linggar... I don't guess there is any record of that.

AT: Linggold or Lingard, wasn't it?

Lucille Sweeny: Mr. Carlisle, was he a manager here? No? Well, I've heard my grandparents talk about him.

AT: You know you would write a book on Mr. Lee. Do you remember Mr. Lee? They brought him down from Virginia. Strange bird.

Marie Davis: Kenneth Nelson told the stories about him.

Lucille Sweeny: His wife passed away here in Diboll.

AT: Did she? He was always so dignified. He always wore a white linen suit, wasn't it?

Lucille Sweeny: And a black umbrella.

AT: And a black umbrella and so dignified and proper. He had that Virginia background. We were out at Boggy Slough, the old, old Boggy Slough Clubhouse one night for a party and he got a little too much to drink and he came up the next morning and told Henry Temple, "Mr. Temple, I would like to apologize." Henry said, "What for?" He said, "Well, I'm afraid I got my tail a little bit over the dashboard last night."

Lucille Sweeny: I think there should have been more about Henry Temple in there.

AT: I do, too.

Lucille Sweeny: People really liked him. He was a good manager.

AT: Oh, he was a great guy and that was one of the hardest things I had to do when I came here, because if I had done everything that people said he promised that he was going to do for them, we would have been broke.

Lucille Sweeny: He didn't make us tear our picket fences down. That was you.

AT: That was me.

Lucille Sweeny: And our children were afraid they would get run over.

AT: That's right. Well, you were afraid of the hogs that were running loose in the streets. There wasn't anything to run over anybody. There weren't that many cars in Diboll.

Lucille Sweeny: That was a big bill, wasn't it? To keep the picket fences up that came down.

AT: Oh, yes.

Brenda Russell: But the hogs did run wild here?

AT: Absolutely, when I came here outside of what is now the old highway, you know, there wasn't a piece of pavement in Diboll, not one.

Bea Burkhalter: When I came here there wasn't anything.

AT: Is that right? You know, it is hard to believe, isn't it?

Bea Burkhalter: In 1906, I came here in 1906. There wasn't any pavement here.

Marie Davis: I remember Joe Bob Hendricks told in his interview that Mr. Devereaux plowed places across the road in front of his house so people would have to stop when they got there, so the dust wouldn't be so bad.

AT: That's right. I'll tell you when it was hot and dry... I can remember eating at the old hotel down here, Mrs. Estes, and, of course, Lee Estes. His name wasn't even mentioned. And Lee Estes was one of the key guys down here.

Pate Warner: Mr. Weise worked here a long time.

AT: That's right, Heinie Weise. He hasn't been dead very long. I'll tell you another thing. You know, when Mr. O'Hara and Mr. Strauss took over after Watson Walker, that was a kind of dumb deal because nobody knew who was running it. One of them was supposed to be running the mill and one running the woods, the front. But it just didn't work and it was really a dark day and do you know who held the company together in those days? Clyde Thompson, no question about it.

Pate Warner: Mr. O'Hara was about the most unpopular man that ever was.

AT: I could tell that, but I'll tell you if it hadn't been for Clyde Thompson, and that's the reason when he came up for retirement age, I told him, "You will never have to retire." Of course, I thought he would. I'll tell you, he was still working the day he left.

Julia Schinke: I'll have to tell you, Eddie and I were talking about you one time and he said, "He is the smartest business man I have ever known", and I think you have proven that.

AT: Well, I'll tell you what smarts I've got, anybody that has ever accomplished anything knows that the people that helped him is what does it.

Julia Schinke: But you had the vision.

AT: We had a good sawmill. The reason we ran it was because we had all those good folks. I didn't have to do anything except say "No" every now and then. It was....

Julia Schinke: You had the vision. You could see farther than your nose.

AT: I hope that is right, but I enjoyed every bit of it, and I don't believe in retirement. I guess I have bored you as long as I ought to. I enjoyed it, but let's keep digging for more of the history. I think particularly the stories are interesting. I enjoyed the part in there...

somebody, I've forgotten who... lived out here by Stovall Creek, and she was talking about riding a pony into town. You know, I rode out to Stovall Creek one time. I used to go horseback riding with Dave and Ed Kenley when I would come down, and we would ride out that way.

Marie Davis: It was Gussie Wright.

Brenda Russell: You still have fifteen minutes to talk.

AT: Why you are going to bore these people to death. I could tell you a hundred stories about, a thousand stories about Clyde Thompson. But I'm afraid somebody would print them. Everybody could tell them. Who else have we overlooked in this?

Lucille Sweeny: Berniece Hines.

Brenda Russell: What about Mr. Rutland?

Franklin Weeks: George Johnson.

AT: Yes, Mr. Rutland was a grand gentleman.

Brenda Russell: What did he do?

AT: He ran the store.

Vivian Warner: He was Josephine Frederick's father. He was manager of the store, the commissary, for a period of time. Let's qualify this on the argument of the cornbread whistle and the biscuit whistle. We need to tie on that, when are we talking about? Because it was both "cornbread and biscuit whistle."

Julia Schinke: Maybe it was changed later on, but it was first "cornbread whistle."

Vivian Warner: Oh, it was?

AT: I just never heard it referred to.... You know I came relatively late. I came down here in '48.

Vivian Warner: And when you came, it was the "biscuit whistle?"

AT: That's all I ever heard and that's the reason...

Vivian Warner: We need to always say when...

Franklin Weeks: You city folks called it the "cornbread... biscuit whistle", but out at Ryan's Chapel, when we were in the fields plowing, it was the "quarter whistle".

AT: “Quarter whistle”, yes, I’ve heard that used.

Glenda Shepherd: When I was a little girl, my mother would put the cornbread in the oven at a quarter ‘til, and then Daddy would come home to eat and it was always ready.

Vivian Warner: Some families didn’t want cornbread, they wanted biscuits.

Julia Schinke: When I was growing up, we had biscuits for breakfast.

AT: Generally speaking, I’ll give in on it because I’ve conceded that it was generally biscuits for breakfast and cornbread for dinner.

Pate Warner: Way back then, when you talk about it... a carload of flour would come in, that sounds unreasonable, 48 pound sacks is what we sold. You’d be surprised how much...

AT: No, I wouldn’t because I’ll tell you what, somewhere, and I can’t lay my hand on it, but I saved some letters during the Depression. Think this was in *The Cornbread Whistle*. But during the Depression, I have letters that my Dad wrote to, I believe it was Bewley’s Mills, one of the flour mills, and he was begging them, please, that we couldn’t pay them right then, but please ship us one more car on credit because the people needed it. That’s hard to believe, isn’t it? But it’s true. I have letters from E. C. Durham talking about during the Depression, how tough things were. I wish I could find them.

Brenda Russell: They may be over in the old office building in all those files that you have over there.

AT: No, I’ll tell you. I put them in a special place in my desk and in some of those moves, they have gotten placed somewhere else than in my office because I have looked for them. But I do have the sheet that shows from the beginning of Southern Pine Lumber Company down to, I keep it current now, how much the company made each year. Each of those years and, I’m telling you, some of those are pretty pitiful. This company didn’t make as much as some of the officers make in those days. It was remarkable that it stayed together. But during the Depression, ... we went into the Depression owing two million dollars, which doesn’t sound like that much today for the company, but it was all the money in the world during the Depression and we couldn’t pay it.

You read where... I think you put it in there...how they tried to throw us into receivership, bankruptcy. Dad talked them out of it, Mr. Florence saved us. But during those days, of course, we had lots of land and good timber. We had lots of assets, but no money and you couldn’t sell them.

Finally the government came in and paid us about two or three dollars an acre and bought, I think, 100,000 acres. I’m not sure it was that much, but bought a large tract of land which is now part of the Davy Crockett Forest, and we had to take it. [*editorial note, 2008: Temple Lumber Company sold 77,806 acres in Sabine County to the federal government in 1935 for \$2.50 an acre; the lands became a portion of Sabine National*

Forest]. It wasn't because we thought that was a big price, but my Father had to take it because there wasn't any way to keep feeding the people, it he hadn't. I'll tell you, some people are finding out now, that are having a hard time now, that have lost their jobs, etc. But I don't have to tell you, you know that Depression was a humdinger. I start trying to talk to Buddy about that and how it was then, and you know, he looks at me like... "Yeah, you walked fifteen miles to school through the snow." People who weren't there just don't have any conception.

Lucille Sweeny: Do you think they could accept that today?

AT: No, but let me tell you this, I think some of the best things that happened, I think a lot of good things, came out of the Depression. For instance, we didn't have to go to a movie or something that cost money. Neighbors would come over and somebody would play the piano and we would sing, or we would make some lemonade or something. Maybe we didn't have lemonade, but I think the family thrived. I think it was great. I'd just as soon they would do away with a lot of this stuff they have now.

Pate Warner: People were closer together than they are now.

AT: That's right.

Marie Davis: You know, Diboll will soon be 100 years old. Do you have any plans?

AT: Gosh, I haven't even thought about it. No, but you know my wife, Lottie, was born down at Rockland and lived there.... no, she was born in Groveton, she lived in Rockland. She is seven years younger than I am, but I talked to her frequently about the Depression and she said, "You were unlucky." Of course, I was very young.

END OF INTERVIEW