

GRESHAM TEMPLE

Interview 74a

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ABSTRACT: Henry Gresham Temple, Jr., T.L.L. Temple's great-nephew, reminisces about the Temple family and businesses. He recalls working for the family business in Pineland and Diboll before he went into the oil business and started his own company. His father, H.G. Temple, Sr., worked in Pineland and Diboll as well.

Megan Lambert (hereafter ML): This is Megan Lambert interviewing Mr. Gresham Temple in Lufkin, Texas August 16, 1985. Let me begin with just a few questions about yourself, the background of where you were born and where you lived and that sort of thing.

Gresham Temple (hereafter GT): I was born in Diboll.

ML: Born in Diboll. How long did you live there before you went any place else?

GT: I was born in 1910 in Diboll and moved to Pineland in 1917.

ML: And how long did you stay in Pineland?

GT: Well, the family lived there twenty-one years and then moved back to Diboll.

ML: When you were living in Pineland did you have the idea that you would be involved in the family business?

GT: Well, I worked for Temple Lumber Company three or four years.

ML: Three or four years, when you were in Pineland?

GT: Yes.

ML: And was it your intention to stay in the lumber business?

GT: No, the lumber business was pretty bad when I was a young man, and I decided I'd better get out of it.

ML: What year would that have been that you moved from Pineland?

GT: From Pineland, 1938 is when our family moved. They moved in 1937 and I moved to Lufkin in 1938.

ML: One of the things that has struck me about the members of your family is that lots of them seem to feel that the family business is the same thing as the family, in fact that is something that Arthur Temple said to me a couple of times, he feels that the family is the business and the business is family. Is that the feeling you were brought up with?

GT: Yes, but I thought a whole lot of my father but I didn't like to work for him. He expected about five times more out of me than he did any other employee.

ML: Not surprising. Were you named for your father?

GT: Yes, I'm Henry Gresham, Jr.

ML: Marie Davis, who has gotten to be a pretty good friend of mine, I guess worked for your father. She was a secretary and she told me that she thought you also have a son named Henry Gresham.

GT: Yes, he lives in Shreveport.

ML: Has he gone into the family business?

GT: No, he is in the oil business, too.

ML: Well, tell me about your decision to change from lumber to oil.

GT: Well, mainly it was because my daddy was too rough on me. I worked there at Pineland for \$0.13 ½ an hour which was pretty good wages in 1931 and 2, or 1932.

ML: I'm just becoming familiar with the different business entities, which were either spin offs or associates or affiliates of the original Southern Pine Lumber Company. Would you tell me a little bit about the way the different companies were established?

GT: The way I understand it T. L. L. Temple started out in Diboll in about 1893 and somewhere around 1915 he bought, I believe it was the Garrison Lumber Company at Pineland which became Temple Lumber Company and about 1922 they bought the Knox Lumber Company at Hemphill.

ML: Oh, Mrs. Lillian Knox, the famous –

GT: The name of the town was East Mayfield, which joined Hemphill. I knew Lillian, of course, I was around 12 years old. I knew her several years, even after I got old enough to go to work in Pineland.

ML: I heard she was a pretty strong minded and effective businesswoman. Can you tell me a little bit about her?

GT: Well, she was a little bit rough around the edges. I mean she could cuss like a sailor.

ML: Maybe that made her a little more effective, I don't know, what do you think?

GT: Well, she had a good lumber company in Hemphill that was bought by Temple Lumber Company and she was originally from around Corrigan, she and Hiram Knox.

ML: What did she do after she sold the company?

GT: I just don't know what happened to her. Well, I do know; my daddy told me one time he was up in Dallas at a football game and he was in heavy traffic and this car kept blowing their horn, it kind of irritated him, but he finally discovered it was Lillian that was blowing at him because she knew him, trying to attract his attention. He thought somebody was just picking at him.

ML: Well, how about the different companies, like Temple Lumber Company, Temple Cotton Oil Company, Temple Oil Company. What was the relationship among those different companies?

GT: Well, Temple Cotton Oil Company was, I mean, T. L. L. was the owner of that, Latane worked for them. Then there were the Temple Lumber Company yards, of course, that was owned by the Temple Lumber Company at Pineland, they had thirty some odd lumberyards. Now the Temple Oil Company is not related to the other Temple industries.

ML: You founded that, is that right?

GT: Yes.

ML: Well, this is an interesting part of the country and an interesting several decades that your business has spanned. My own grandfather was a chemist for Gulf Oil and I have heard quite a few stories about the development and refinancing, etc. at Port Arthur. I don't know that much about the oil business in other parts of East Texas. Would you like to just talk about it a little?

GT: Well, I started out in the oil business in 1933 in Bronson, Texas, which is about seven miles from Pineland, and our district manager, I think, was from Woodville. His name was Ross Harrelson.

ML: That name sure rings a bell because there is Harrelson Lakes near Lake Tejas.

GT: The best I remember he was originally from Woodville. I was a gulf jobber, or consignee they called it, for about five years and then I moved to Lufkin.

ML: What area does your company serve? I see from Lufkin to Shreveport.

GT: My son, Henry, is in Shreveport, two separate companies. We kind of work together.

ML: How long has he had his establishment in Shreveport?

GT: Since 1964.

ML: Before that the center of it was here?

GT: Of course, we are just a small outfit compared to the Lumber Company.

ML: I'd be very interested in your perspective on the development of lumbering and its effect on Diboll. Of course, Diboll would not exist without the lumber industry.

GT: Nor would Pineland.

ML: Nor would Pineland. Maybe what I ought to ask you to do is compare Diboll and Pineland as company towns.

GT: Well, Pineland, back in the '20's, was really back in the woods. There was only one way to get out of Pineland and that was by train. Of course, that was about the same story at Diboll at the time. That was the only means of travel.

ML: When was the road built through Diboll?

GT: Well, let's see, I can remember the first car in Diboll, I believe, Mr. Frank Farrington, who was the postmaster, bought the first car.

ML: Do you remember what year that was?

GT: I'd say around 1915 or '16.

ML: Did other people buy cars pretty quickly after that?

GT: No, he had the only car in Diboll for a long time.

ML: Did he take everybody for rides?

GT: Yes.

ML: And it was dirt roads for a very long time, I'll bet you.

GT: I'd say up until around 1925, before they had any paved roads. Of course, in Pineland there weren't any paved roads.

ML: Something I have wondered about is the conspicuously excellent highway that runs through Diboll now. It is one of the best looking ones in East Texas as far as I know of. When was the double highway built?

GT: I'd say around 1940. You see, out of Lufkin there are three Diboll highways, there is the Old Diboll Highway and the old, Old Diboll Highway. There are three different roads going out of Lufkin.

ML: I didn't realize that, but they are all paved now, doubtless?

GT: Yes, the one I remember originally, it went west of the railroad tracks down to Hoshall, do you know where Hoshall is? There was a sawmill at Hoshall.

ML: I don't know about that one then. How far south of Lufkin is that?

GT: It would be about four miles, I imagine.

ML: And the main road was on the west side of the track?

GT: Down to Hoshall, it crossed the tracks back this side of Hoshall.

ML: And did that road go on down to Diboll?

GT: Well, it went on and it crossed the next Old Diboll Highway, it wound around and went through Burke and then went back across the railroad tracks and came into Diboll through Copestown.

ML: Okay, is that by any chance that road that you can still see in Diboll today that runs just west of the railroad tracks?

GT: No, it came, it crossed the railroad at Burke, well, it crossed the railroad at Hoshall and wound around and went back west across the railroad and you came in through what we called Copestown, which would be about where that Borden Plant is, or the Creosote Plant is.

ML: So that was the oldest road and where is the second one?

GT: It runs right behind, do you know where Angelina College is? Well, it runs right behind Angelina College, you turn off, there is a road turns off, not too far, you know, where the Holiday Inn is, well, it's the first paved road turning off to the right.

ML: Well, I'll have to drive along there sometime.

GT: It will take you right on into Diboll, right through Hoshall. The oldest road crosses the second oldest road right at Hoshall. The oldest highway comes on into the present road, but that wasn't the original route.

ML: Let me ask you something about Diboll that interests me. A number of people have gone so far as to use the word "feudal" when they described the timber company town because there was a kind of paternal relationship between the company and the people who lived in the town: and Arthur told me he tried hard to get away from the paternalistic relationship later on when he took over. But in the early years that was true of many timber company towns, and also true of Diboll. Do you think that that economic relationship affected the growth of the town?

GT: Well, say back at Pineland, there was no business except the Lumber Company in town. They owned all the land and it was more or less the same in Diboll. If a fellow wanted to put in a little store or something he had to get out on the out skirts of town because there wasn't any of the land in town for sale.

ML: Oh, I see. Well, in Diboll, did they pay with script, etc. at the commissary?

GT: Yes and over at Pineland.

ML: Did they basically have the same management policy at Pineland and Diboll?

GT: I would say so, yes.

ML: Just no real business difference between the two places, huh?

GT: Of course, they were separate companies.

ML: But one was patterned on the other, would you say?

GT: I would say so, yes. I know when we moved to Pineland in 1917 our house was the only house in town that had electric lights. The only reason we had lights we lived right close to the sawmill and they had electricity and they just ran a line from the sawmill over to our house. I remember my daddy had an old negro that kind of worked around the yard, milked the cow. My daddy told old Uncle Jim about dark one evening, he said "Uncle Jim, go out to the barn and cut those lights out." When my daddy came in he saw these lights burning. Uncle Jim went out there and a little while later he came back and said "Well, Cap, you like to have lost your old negro." Dad said "What's wrong?" "Well, you told me to go cut those lights out," he said, "I went out to the barn and got me a box and got up on it. I got my knife out and I cut the lights out. When I cut into that wire, all I could see was hell fire and damnation." But there was no running water, no lights, anything in any of the houses. And the same deal in Diboll.

ML: Until about when?

GT: I'd say it was that way for ten years anyway.

ML: Tell me about, well, one of the things people told me I should ask you about is your family house in Diboll. When was that built, who lived in it, etc.?

GT: You mean the old Temple house down there now? It was built in 1937.

ML: The house behind it, was that built at the same time?

GT: I didn't think there was but one house there?

ML: Maybe I'm mistaken, maybe it is a barn, or a garage or something behind it. But I thought it had been made into a dwelling. Am I right about that?

GT: I don't believe it, now the house was built for my father and we had a servant house.

ML: Maybe that was it.

GT: But I don't think it is even, but it may be standing there, I don't know. I was born in the house right across the railroad from where the office used to be.

ML: Marie Davis was telling me that she remembered that your father's office had some wonderful pictures in it of the mill and of your family, etc. and she wondered if you still had those pictures.

GT: He had mainly pictures of people in his office. He had lots of friends.

ML: One of the things that we are doing with this project is that we are trying to see all of the old pictures we can and include them in the book. Reprints, old pictures if we can find some good ones.

GT: He never was – he was big on pictures of his friends, not things.

ML: Not items of general interest. Well, let me just go on with my questions. I wonder if you could talk a little bit about what you might call “company spirit” in the Southern Pine Lumber Company and Temple Eastex, etc. And how it helped to build up the town of Diboll, seems like there was a lot of company spirit going on there.

GT: Well, like you said a while ago, it is sort of a family spirit.

ML: Latane told me that he thought T. L. L. Temple's religious background and religious interest had a lot to do with his civic mindedness, his social attitude in building up the town of Diboll. Would you agree?

GT: Well, yes, he was a religious man, of course, he was a Christian Science. He had very few vices, he didn't smoke or drink.

ML: Latane told me he was a person who was easy on other people but very hard on himself. Would you agree with that?

GT: He could be pretty hard on his family, I mean, on his employees sometimes. For instance, my daddy moved to Diboll in 1906 and, of course, he was just out of school, got married in Virginia and was working on the timber dock as just a manual labor job. He was sitting down reading the newspaper one day and Mr. T. L. L. was his uncle, and Uncle Tom came by and says "Is that all you've got to do, is sit here and read the newspaper?" My daddy said "Well, I got caught up for a minute, just looking at the sports page." Uncle Tom said "Well, if that's all you have to do, I'll find some more duties for you." But he was pretty stern, probably more stern to him because he was a member of the family.

ML: Were there many other members of the family who were members of the Christian Science Church? I know that Latane is.

GT: I don't believe so. Just those two are the only ones I know of.

ML: And he came originally from an Episcopal background, I think.

GT: Yes, his father was an Episcopal minister, back in Virginia.

ML: Well, is the rest of the family fairly diverse religiously or do many of them go to the same church?

GT: Actually, they are pretty well all Episcopalians.

ML: And just those two became Christian Science? Do you see any similarity between the ideas of Christian Science or Episcopalianism or was that a clean break?

GT: I don't see any connection. I mean, I don't know too much about this Christian Science religion. I know, Uncle Tom didn't believe in doctors.

ML: Was that the main difference, would you say?

GT: That was the difference, the big difference. He might have lived longer if he, or he might not have lived as long, you can't tell. He didn't want any doctors to fool with him.

ML: I heard that he had brought some, I don't know if they were lay preachers or what, some ladies, one from St. Louis and one from Long Island, who were big in the Christian Science Church, brought them to Diboll to, I don't know, maybe to preach or to talk about Christian Science, do you know anything about that?

GT: I don't know.

ML: I feel like I need to look into that partly because Latane felt that it was such a strong influence on his grandfather. Anyway, we'll see. One of the things that I have been struck by in talking to people, particularly employees of Southern Pine Lumber Company and Temple Industries, is that I have yet to encounter anybody who has a gripe or a grudge or anything negative to say about the company. Mostly just very complimentary things to say. It is really astounding, you know, that a big company that made the kinds of profits that this company has can have such a good social record, too. Do you have any ideas to account for that?

GT: Well, they have always been pretty fair with their employees. Of course, you will find a few soreheads anywhere.

ML: Well, they do seem to have a marvelous record. Do you know whether the company pursued a policy of sharing the management, more than other companies did?

GT: I would say they did.

ML: Probably more to give people the feeling of participating in the decision-making, etc. Well, the impression I get, particularly from talking to Arthur Temple was that they had these very democratic bull sessions in which they hashed things out, business problems, etc., and that everybody's opinion was listened to and people felt they had access to the directorship of the company. They had a chance to voice their opinions and apparently had a lot to do with the building of a sense of a mutual responsibility of the outcome. It is really a good formula for the success, it seems like to me.

GT: Actually their labor relations have been real good down through the years.

ML: It sounds like it and then their record for philanthropy also has not hurt their reputation, I guess locally.

GT: No, that has helped out.

ML: It's helped a lot, the Temple Foundation, etc. Would you be able to tell me about other branches of the family and what they are doing?

GT: You mean the Tom Temple family?

ML: Yes, tell me how everybody is related to everybody else.

GT: Well, of course, Latane is not connected with the company and Latane had a half-brother that – John Rogers Temple, that is not connected with the company. I think he lives in San Antonio. Of course, his sister, Helen, she lives up in Long Island, I believe she has moved to North Carolina now.

ML: Her name was Helen? What does she do?

GT: She is just a housewife; she married a very wealthy man.

ML: How about the rest of your family?

GT: Well, I have had two sisters, one of them is deceased; the other one lives in Nacogdoches.

ML: And you have two sons, is that right?

GT: Yes, I have three and a daughter. This is one of them here. That is George, that's the youngest one.

ML: And what about the others?

GT: Well, my daughter lives in San Antonio, of course Henry lives in Shreveport and I have another son who lives here in Lufkin.

ML: Your third son?

GT: He lives here in Lufkin.

ML: And what does he do?

GT: He doesn't do much of anything.

ML: What do you think would be the most important thing for me to be sure and say about the town of Diboll as a company town?

GT: It's really not a company town much any more.

ML: Not any more, no.

GT: But of course Pineland was a company town and Diboll was and so was Hemphill but that's all sort of changed. In fact, then the company owned the houses, furnished the utilities, and they have kind of got away from that. They had cheap rent but they also had real cheap wages.

ML: Now that Diboll is no longer a company town how would you describe it?

GT: I would say Diboll is a pretty modern little town now, compared to what it used to be.

ML: And compared to a lot of the rest of East Texas, too. It kind of got a jump on development, looks like. Tell me about Sally Temple Barnes? I've been told that she is sort of the family historian and I haven't been in touch with her. Who is she related to?

GT: She is the granddaughter of William Temple who was Tom Temple's brother. Her husband was President of the Chief Executive Offices of the Great American Oil Company. I believe that is the name. It was bought by Phillips. Of course he is retired now. General American Oil Company.

ML: General American Oil Company?

GT: Yes, they are on the New York Stock Exchange, a pretty good size company.

ML: Well, is Sally Barnes the person responsible for the concept of the Temple Wheel, the genealogical chart?

GT: Yes.

ML: When did she first start doing those and why?

GT: Oh, I'd say it was five or six years ago, maybe longer than that.

ML: Did she do that so that different members of the family could keep in touch with what their own position in the family genealogically was?

GT: I suppose, I think she just likes family history.

ML: I guess I had better get in touch with her.

GT: Well, she will talk to you.

ML: I wonder if you would be able to describe Diboll when you moved there in 1938, just take me on a mental walk around the town, tell what it looked like.

GT: The highway came right through the middle of town; it came right down by the railroad tracks. You know if you are going to turn and go down behind Angelina College? Just keep right on straight on to Diboll, right down the tracks to where Arthur lives now. Then it kind of curved and went on south, which would be west of the present highway. In 1938 down through town, no, the highway didn't go right through town, I'm wrong on that. The main street right down the tracks was a dirt street. It used to get pretty muddy. The old highway at that time, it pretty well went through town like the present except it would branch off the new highway like you were going to Arthur's house, that's the old highway. It was a pretty country town back in 1938.

ML: Would you be able to estimate the population at that time? I know I can go look this up but –

GT: I would guess 2,500.

ML: About the size Woodville is now.

GT: Or maybe not that big, maybe 2,000 or 1,500. Used to be the only people that lived in Diboll, or any of the company towns, were employees, they lived in company houses.

ML: Maybe about 90% of the people in town worked for the company?

GT: 100%

ML: 100%, okay, so there were frame houses? Were they mostly painted white, the houses or what?

GT: Yes, they were all painted.

ML: Well, did the company maintain the houses?

GT: Yes.

ML: So they must have had to have a little squad of carpenters?

GT: They had a carpenter crew, that's about all they did. You know, they rented for about \$7.00 or \$8.00 a month, included utilities, but like I said, wages were cheap back then.

ML: Well, tell me when the different sections of the town were established, like Copestown and Red Town, the Quarters, etc.?

GT: Well, Copestown, when I was a small child, say in 1915, they had a movie theater in Copestown, didn't have a roof on it. My mother had a friend to come down and visit her one time and the kids running in every direction and she said, "It's not hard to see what the favorite indoor pastime in Diboll is." She was talking about all the children.

ML: Oh, I see.

GT: But, everyone used to have cows and pigs and they used to run the streets. I know over at Pineland there used to be a saying, it was sandy ground there, you could reach down and get a handful of sand and you could see the fleas stirring. And I remember one time when I was a very small child an old negro man carried me out to gather hickory nuts and we were by an old negro church over there in the Quarters and some of the hickory nuts rolled up under the church, and of course, pigs stayed under there, but I crawled up under there to get some hickory nuts and I got about ten million fleas on me. He carried me home. My mother picked me up and put me, clothes and all, in the bath tub. Back in those days everybody had a sleeping porch, it was separate from your house, just a little screened-in room that was built up higher than your house. Of course, when you had a storm or anything everybody had to come down, you know.

ML: They were actually a separate structure from the house?

GT: Yes, not everybody but a lot of people did, like I said, no windows, just a room completely screened, little higher than the rest of your house.

ML: I remember my grandparents' house had one like that in Port Arthur. It was indispensable; it must have been in hot weather.

GT: Well, you know, we had pretty good heat, particularly these houses without electricity, didn't even have a buzz fan.

ML: Well, one of the things I was told about in relationship to the company to the town in Diboll that was during the Depression families who were really in trouble would often be given a cow by the company. Did you know about that, was that the general policy or did that just happen occasionally.

GT: I imagine that was just occasionally. But now, back in the old days in Diboll there was a great rivalry on gardens, everybody tried to out produce his neighbor on his gardens. But to show you the difference, along in the '30's, I worked in the office in Pineland. I didn't have much authority there but I did have authority to sell land. Anybody who came in the office over there could pick out any land, any cut-over land that the company had. Like I said, I had very little authority but I did have the authority to sell creek bottom land for \$10.00 an acre and hill land for \$5.00 an acre. And I never sold the first acre. Nobody had any money.

ML: Oh, gosh, think what it would be now.

GT: People would come in and ask for it but it was cash and just nobody, anybody who had a little cash, they wanted to hang on to it.

ML: Well, did people buy land at other times, besides during the '30's, under that policy?

GT: Well, that policy just lasted during the '30's. But I know my daddy, after I moved to Lufkin, he told me said "There's 600 acres of land for sale just east of Lufkin about two miles east of Lufkin. They want \$6.00 an acre for it" – said, "The timber isn't too good, you ought to buy it." I didn't have any money and I said, "You ought to buy it." He said, "Well, I'm too old but that is a good buy." But that land today you'd get \$2,000.00 for it and that was in 1938.

ML: Who finally bought it?

GT: I don't know, it was out here about where the paper mill is.

ML: I heard there was going to be a new mill in Silsbee starting up.

GT: Yes, that has been in the papers.

ML: That's pretty exciting starting up a mill these days.

GT: Yes, that's kind of unusual.

ML: Unusual, yes. Don't hear of many other companies starting anything like that right now.

GT: They tell me that around here the housing business is just nothing.

ML: So, it is just mostly just shipping timber far away?

GT: I don't know where they sell it. There was a fellow in here the other day that is in the house building business, he said there were 450 houses unsold. In Nacogdoches 500. That's unsold houses, and he said his business, of course he is just a small builder, but...

ML: That's frightening. Who should I talk to, to find out about the new mill at Silsbee and how they think they are going to sell that lumber?

GT: Of course, Joe Denman is the main one, or Jack C. Sweeny, Jr. but a fellow named Maxwell, I don't know him.

ML: Harold Maxwell?

GT: He's a Vice President, and Jack Sweeny, Jr. and of course, they were quoting Joe Denman.

ML: Okay, I'll talk to one of them.

GT: Of course, that may just be a temporary thing but it doesn't sound very good for the housing, but of course, Houston is really over built, more on condominiums and office space, things like that.

ML: I heard that Temple was also cutting a lot of bug timber lately.

GT: Yes, they are doing a lot of that everywhere. A fellow was in here not long ago said they were over around Huntsville; they were cutting this bug timber on government land and hauling it out with helicopters.

ML: Helicopters, wow?

GT: That would be a pretty expensive operation.

ML: I guess so. They must be selling it some place. Have you heard most of the early history of Southern Pine and the buying of land around Diboll, etc? And of Dave Kenley and the things he was able to do in the buying of timberland?

GT: I knew Dave Kenley pretty well, of course. He has two sons who live here now.

ML: Well, I interviewed his wife last summer.

GT: She's getting pretty old, isn't she?

ML: Yes, she had just turned 100 last summer when I interviewed her. But you know, she was as sharp as a tack. She remembered everything in great detail. It was a wonderful experience talking to her. I have been reading a lot of the family, well, not family but business papers that are in Nacogdoches at the library there and Dave Kenley appears to have had a very important roll in how the business got started because he was so enterprising and so full of so many kinds of energy.

GT: There used to be a little town, sawmill town close to Pineland, the name of the town was Remlig, which is Gilmer spelled backwards. And I have heard stories that the man that started that company was Alexander Gilmer and there was an Alexander Gilmer Lumber Company and I've heard that he rode around in that area over there with gold on his saddle bags paying \$0.25 an acre for this fine long leaf timberland. But back in those days, to the natives, timberland wasn't worth anything because, to start out with, it was poor land, and the second thing, it was such a chore to clear it, you know. The old timbers, the only way they could make a living was farming. So pine timberland had no value, you could buy it for \$0.25 an acre.

ML: And then particularly if you were able to run cattle on it like Dave Kenley did eventually. Did he ever tell you about all that?

GT: Mr. Dave? Oh, I knew him real well. He used to run cattle on lumber company land. Had a fellow working for me one time and he told me that he used to work for Dave Kenley. We were talking about how tight Dave was. Said we were over here about Apple Springs one day and it got along about noon and said Dave said "Well, we'd better get some lunch." Said he stopped at a little old country store and bought a head of cabbage and a loaf of bread. The fellow said he had cabbage sandwiches for lunch.

ML: That's a good story. Well, it seems like he really knew how to – I guess you would say, "wheel a deal" in a lot of different directions.

GT: There's a story about, you know Kirby Lumber Company used to be the biggest lumber company in East Texas. Some eastern moneyed people sent this fellow down in this area to buy timber for them. Well, this fellow went around East Texas here buying timber for these eastern capitalists and every time he would buy a section of land for the eastern people he'd make the seller throw in a section for him and that was John Henry Kirby. And they claim, Kirby Lumber Company had well over a million acres of land and they say their land looked like a checkerboard. When Kirby would buy 640-acre tract, or whatever size tract, he always got an equal size tract that went to him in the deal. You know, Kirby at one time had about eight sawmills in this area and I see where they are for sale now. I was just wondering if maybe Temple Eastex wasn't going to buy them. They

belong to the Santa Fe and Southern Pacific, Kirby does, and I saw where they were going to try to sell their lumber holdings.

ML: Maybe I could ask Joe Denman about that, too.

GT: The rumor had been that they were going to buy Owens Illinois but, of course, Kirby would be a lot bigger purchase but Kirby's headquarters is one around Silsbee where this new mill is going in. I'm sure they are looking at it but whether they are going to buy it, I don't know. I imagine it would be a pretty good size purchase.

ML: What do you see as the future of the company?

GT: I have a lot of different brokers that call me and they all are very strong on Temple Inland. All the big brokerage houses in New York that I have talked to are recommending Temple Inland as a good buy. And of course, their stocks are up pretty good.

ML: Well, are there any members in your family who are going to be involved with the on going management?

GT: It looks like the string has run out, doesn't it?

ML: It kind of does. I understand that Buddy decided not to be involved. I wonder how Arthur feels about that?

GT: I'm sure he has encouraged Buddy to go along those lines but evidently Buddy has declined. I don't know of any other member of the family who would be in line for it.

ML: That really must be something. Well, maybe it's a little hard for Arthur to contemplate, I don't know. I didn't feel like I ought to ask him about that, but maybe I will when I get to know him better.

GT: I don't know of any, even any son-in-laws.

ML: How many daughters does he have?

GT: He just has one.

ML: Can you tell me about the hunting club, Boggy Slough, and the things that went on there? I guess there were a lot of business meetings that happened there?

GT: Yes, two of the company officials died out there.

ML: They did? On hunting trips? Who was that?

GT: Well, during the '20's there was a man named Dan Gilbert, he was – Uncle Tom just sort of hired him to take things over.

ML: Was that L. D. Gilbert?

GT: Yes, and oh, he ran the company because Uncle Tom got where he lived up on Long Island about six or seven months out of the year and he died out at Boggy Slough, L. D. Then there was another fellow that was Superintendent who was a cousin of the family, Watson Walker, have you heard of him?

ML: I have heard of him.

GT: He was a relative of the Temples. His mother was a Temple and he died out at Boggy Slough, or had his attack out at Boggy Slough and died shortly after they got him to town. Back in the '20's, the only deer in East Texas were out at Boggy Slough. And now there are deer all over East Texas.

ML: Why do you think the only ones were at Boggy Slough?

GT: Well, they created a little game refuge out there and whether they supplied the rest of the state, or the rest of East Texas, I don't know.

ML: It would be nice to be able to say if you had any evidence, wouldn't it?

GT: Well, it – when I lived in Pineland I hunted quail a lot for years. I never saw the first deer around Pineland but now the deer is pretty thick around there.

ML: We had a deer go through a plate glass window in downtown Woodville the other day. They are so thick.

GT: In all the East Texas area I never saw a deer, and like I said, I used to get out and walk all day hunting quail around San Augustine, Sabine County, even down in Tyler County.

ML: Do you think they were killed out earlier?

GT: Yes, they were killed, that was the main meat crop. But they really made a comeback.

ML: You seem like a person who knows a lot of anecdotes, stories about this area, company and family, etc. are there any other stories that I ought to know about?

GT: What do you know about L. D. Gilbert?

ML: Not enough, not enough.

GT: He was my daddy's boss. My daddy was over the mills at Pineland, Hemphill and later Diboll and Mr. Gilbert was his boss. So they were walking around one real cold day

over at Hemphill on the plant. Daddy said they had on their hats and coats turned up and there was an old man working on the plant over there named Tige Gloughlin. He asked daddy "What ever happened to that fellow Gilbert? I never see him coming around much any more." Of course, Mr. Gilbert was standing there but the old fellow didn't recognize him. Tige said "You know I always did figure that sob was a crook." Mr. Gilbert was pretty salty but that tickled him, didn't take offense.

ML: Any stories about Arthur, Sr. that I ought to know?

GT: Well, I knew Arthur real well, I can't right off hand, I can't.

ML: Or anything else that comes to mind?

GT: Well, there are a lot of stories but it is hard to think of them when you want to. One thing, my daddy moved to Diboll, they were just freshly married, broke, my daddy worked on the timber dock in the day time and he worked in the commissary at night. My mother worked in the post office. My mother knew everybody in Diboll by their first name and she said that anybody living in Diboll wanted to call somebody country they were from Petersburg. And Petersburg was a little sawmill down on the river, down below Diboll, might have been, I think it might have been even across the river. But she said if you wanted to call somebody country, just tell them they were from Petersburg.

ML: That was a little sawmill?

GT: Yes, there was a sawmill at Emporia. You have heard of Emporia, just below Arthur's house down there and there was one at Hoshall and over at Pineland you could hear. In the morning or at night you could hear, I believe it was six different sawmills, you could hear their whistles from Pineland.

ML: Really?

GT: Kirby had a mill at Bronson which is seven miles: another at Steve Creek was three miles north of Bronson; and had one at Browndale which was eight miles south of Pineland. Then the town of Remlig was sort of south of Pineland about seven miles. You could hear – from Pineland on a still day you could hear a bunch of sawmills. The whistles from them.

ML: I guess that was true in Diboll, too, three or four anyway?

GT: Oh, there were several, of course, the mill at Hoshall was what they called a Peckerwood mill, just you know, small. I don't remember the one at Emporia. The old mill pond is still down there.

ML: I've heard that, I need to go have a look. Was there a relationship between the mill at Emporia and the Emporia Lumber Company who ran a mill at Doucette down in Tyler County or was that two different things?

GT: I just don't remember, but I was thinking that was Long Bell at Doucette.

ML: It was later Long Bell but there were actually about four different companies that owned the mill at Doucette in succession and Long Bell was the final one before EPCO got it. I wanted to ask you about these whistles, the Diboll people are always telling me about the cornbread whistle at 11:15.

GT: At 11:15.

ML: Did they have one of those at Pineland, too?

GT: No, they didn't have that at Pineland.

ML: Whose idea was that at Diboll?

GT: I don't know. You know they say the men would go home for lunch and their wives would have been around gabbing all morning and wouldn't have lunch ready so the – I always heard it was the biscuit whistle, but that was for the wives to start cooking lunch, or dinner. They called it dinner, they didn't call it lunch.

ML: So they got off at 12?

GT: Yes, that was the signal to start cooking. There was a fellow over at Hemphill, I always liked this story. The mill burned over there, I believe it was about 1922, and he was a drykiln foreman and he said he heard the fire whistle blowing about 2 or 3 o'clock in the morning, said he got up to go look and see and his wife said "What is it, honey?" He said "It's the job." The plant completely burned.

ML: I'm glad you told me that. TI proves a lot, the job burning.

GT: It wasn't the mill, it was his job.

ML: Well, was there ever a big fire in Diboll?

GT: Well, when I was a kid there were three mills at Diboll one, two and three. I can remember when mill three burned up, that was in 1915. You see I was born in 1910.

ML: I'll bet it was horrible to see, something like that.

GT: Then they dwindled down to one mill and then it burned about ten or twelve years ago.

ML: They just built it up again?

GT: They rebuilt it, yes.

ML: What kind of fire protection have they had through the years at Diboll?

GT: Well, back in the old days when they blew the fire whistle everybody went – there wasn't a fire department.

ML: Just run out with buckets?

GT: No, they had fire hydrants around and hoses but no fire department. Of course, the employees, I think some of them were supposed to sort of take care of it.

ML: When did they get a fire department in Diboll?

GT: They had one I'd say, in 1935. Something like that.

ML: How about other city services, like sewerage and such, when did they get that?

GT: I'd say somewhere around in the '30's, late '30's.

ML: That was pretty early for an East Texas town.

GT: Used to be all outhouses.

ML: Maybe you can answer this question. I've been trying to find out why Diboll was incorporated two different times in its history, do you now anything about that?

GT: No.

ML: They say it was incorporated once and then it was disincorporated; I don't know if it had to do with taxes or what.

GT: I moved back to Lufkin in, my daddy and mother moved back to Lufkin in '37, I mean back to Diboll, and I moved back in '38 and shortly after that my wife died and I moved down there with them with two young children and it wasn't incorporated, I don't believe.

ML: I don't think so. I don't think it was incorporated until quite late.

GT: And I moved to Lufkin in 1960.

END OF INTERVIEW