

**Icie Courtney Waltman**  
**Interview 97a**  
**March 25, 1986**  
**Marie Davis, Interviewer**  
**Retyped by Courtney Lawrence**

**ABSTRACT:** Born September 6, 1895, Icie Courtney Waltman moved to Angelina County at the age of 11. Her interview covers a broad range of subjects dealing with early country life. Some topics she discussed are riding sidesaddle, syrup making, planting corn, the influences of alcohol, and the beautiful countryside between Diboll and Prairie Grove.

**Marie Davis (hereafter MD):** Today I am talking with Mrs. Icie Courtney Waltman. She lives at 408 Ponderosa, Lufkin, Texas. Today's date is March 25, 1986 and my name is Marie Davis. Mrs. Waltman, when were you born?

**Icie Waltman (hereafter IW):** I was born September 6, 1895.

**MD:** Where were you born?

**IW:** Somewhere between – you know where Damascus Church is? Between the Church and the highway, back then there was a settlement called Lime Ridge. In there somewhere my mother and daddy lived. Her mother and daddy lived a little bit north of this Lime Ridge place.

**MD:** That was in Damascus, in Polk County?

**IW:** Yes.

**MD:** Who were your parents?

**IW:** Samuel, we called him Sam, Courtney and my mother was Emmaline McMillan.

**MD:** When did you come to Angelina County?

**IW:** I was eleven years old.

**MD:** We could figure that up, couldn't we?

**IW:** Yes, I tried last night but I just got sleepy and weak.

**MD:** Probably about 1906, wasn't it? That would be eleven years from the time you were born. Did you have any relatives living in Angelina County when you came? Any kinfolks already living here?

**IW:** My daddy had a brother, his oldest brother, lived out, you know where Prairie Grove is? He lived out kind of on the edge of the settlement. When the liquor business got so bad at Corrigan my granddaddy and all his youngens lived about five miles north of Corrigan. There was a saloon in Corrigan, which – every little place that had a post office then had a liquor store. It’s pathetic to think that the farmers would take Saturday night, well, they would go to town on Saturday morning, sometimes in the morning and stay all day long. They would take their little dab of milk, butter or eggs or whatever into town and sell it. They’d stay, then when they got it all sold, they gathered up when it began to get late at the saloon. They’d have arguments and maybe they would, just for fun, get to shooting, you know. Take their guns with them. There was one young man, his name was Vinson, that worked for one of the stores, and he got off from work about nine o’clock every night and, of course, he walked home. They lived out about a mile and a half or two miles from the town. They were out there just having fun shooting up in the air, and they struck that young man and killed him. They buried him in a crypt at Stryker Cemetery so everybody that passed by could see him, what the liquor had done. Well, that brought about the election to vote it out. My granddaddy, my daddy’s daddy, had two sons that lived, one on each side of him, and then my daddy lived close by but those two sons would go on Saturday night, one of them every Saturday night. When it began to get dusky dark my daddy would say “Well, I’ve got to go to Corrigan to see about William.” He would go down there and he would be drunk. Papa had an old mule that he called “Charlie.” William had a big old red horse that he called “Salem.” Papa would put Uncle William in the saddle, he would get on behind him he’d hold Uncle William with one hand and the reins for old Charlie and Uncle William with the same hand, then he’d lead old Salem with the other and bring him home. Well, my granddaddy decided he would sell everything they had over there and move to Angelina, close to where my uncle lived and get him out of the influence of it. That’s how come the Courtney family came to Angelina.

**MD:** What was your grandfather’s name?

**IW:** Ruben Courtney, they called him Rube.

**MD:** What was your grandmother’s name.

**IW:** Georgia Ann. That was his wife. Daddy’s mother. He was what we called a “home made preacher” back then.

**MD:** Was the church at Prairie Grove when you moved there? Was it a Baptist Church?

**IW:** No, there was only a schoolhouse.

**MD:** Did they have church in the schoolhouse?

**IW:** They had everything that came up. Speakings – finally my uncle who had been in Angelina a year or two before the rest of the family came –

**MD:** What was his name?

**IW:** Buddy, well, his name was Vince, but we called him Buddy. He organized a Sunday school there in that schoolhouse. We used it for funerals and everything. There was a Baptist Church at Pine Grove, but most of us went in a wagon or walked. We'd have couples and we had one Nazarene couple, just a young man who kind of grew up in the settlement and married a Nazarene girl.

**MD:** Who was that?

**IW:** Lawrence Wright and her name was Needy York. They would want to come to the schoolhouse and preach on Sunday evenings about once a month.

**MD:** The Nazarene faith?

**IW:** Yes, from the Nazarene Church here in Lufkin. There was a kind of funny saying that after they married, now she was a preacher too. The Nazarene women would preach if they wanted to. Well, she led him into it. Her parents didn't want her to marry, you know, he was a Methodist. They didn't want her to marry out of their faith, so she slipped off and they said he got one of her preacher friends to help her get off. They'd say, "Well, a preacher stole a preacher by a preacher from a preacher?"

**MD:** Give me the names of your brothers and sisters.

**IW:** My sister next to me, and mama lost her first child and the third one. Then there was me and Myrtle, Lonzo, my brother is the only boy, and Ora after him. Then mama skipped seven or eight years, and had Erline, then she skipped, I think it was eight or nine more years and had two, Jewel and Janet.

**MD:** Twins?

**IW:** Twins.

**MD:** So they were younger than the rest of you, weren't they?

**IW:** Yes.

**MD:** Who did you marry?

**IW:** I married J. W. Waltman.

**MD:** Name your children.

**IW:** The oldest one was born exactly to the day eleven months after I married. His name was Cleveland Lee and his daddy named him after President Cleveland and his brother.

The only brother he had was Lee. Then a year and a half I had Allen on my birthday, on my 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday.

**MD:** That was nice, and then your daughter?

**IW:** Yes, it lacked two weeks being nine years between she and Allen and she was spoiled – Janice.

**MD:** I imagine. How many grandchildren do you have?

**IW:** I have eight and I have sixteen great-grandchildren and I have three adopted great grandchildren and I have two step great-grandchildren. That makes twenty-six, I believe.

**MD:** In all, that's nice. Can you remember what the countryside looked like a long, long time ago between Diboll and Prairie Grove?

**IW:** Yes, in a way. We thought it was a beautiful drive, you know, with pine trees, and when you got close to the old Stovall place, along the creek was dogwoods and red buds and yellow jasmine – just any kind of wild flowers you could think of.

**MD:** What about the trees, did they seem a lot bigger then than they are now?

**IW:** Yes. I have traveled to several places the last year or two, traveling along the road, and it has been amazing to me how thick the little pines were and they just look, like switch cane we used to call it. One day I was with them and I said “You know, with everything else the pine trees have multiplied, too and they have just run up like a cane stalk and just have foliage in the top of them.”

**MD:** But you can probably remember when they were huge, can't you?

**IW:** Yes, and the woods were not so crowded.

**MD:** Why do you think that was? Was it because the cattle ran in the woods?

**IW:** I would think that perhaps that had something to do with it. I guess it's just like everything else, like the human race, the longer we are here the more we are going to multiply. It's amazing to me that the land that used to be open with big trees on it is just crowded now.

**MD:** With all the underbrush? Somebody said one reason the trees were so big is that they shaded out all the little stuff underneath.

**IW:** I think there have been different animals, squirrels and rabbits birds that eat the seed.

**MD:** And there are not that many now?

**IW:** No, people keep them killed out now.

**MD:** Oh well, I hadn't thought about that, that's a good idea.

**IW:** When I was a child people would go in the woods and kill squirrels, you know, that fed on acorns and that was a yearly habit because they didn't have much meat. They had hogs running wild, to eat all that stuff and root the ground, root it up. Now then, everybody keeps their stock up.

**MD:** What else did they kill besides the wild hogs and squirrels, what other wildlife did they kill?

**IW:** They killed coons and possums. Now there were just few people who would eat a possum. They weren't too fond of coons either but there were goats and sheep that ran wild then. And the goats would eat the underbrush and they would kill a goat once in a while, and deer. Every year there were deer hunters.

**MD:** Did you ever hear anything about bear or anything down in that area?

**IW:** I don't believe I did. We had wild cats, what they call wild cats, and everybody was really afraid of them.

**MD:** When you went from Prairie Grove to Diboll, how did you travel? When you were a young girl, did you have a buggy or what?

**IW:** We had a wagon, we never did have a buggy. During that time my daddy and his brother, William, they bought a farm together, William took the house that is on the farm and my daddy and mother took the open...it wasn't open land; it was covered with trees and shrubbery and things like that. After we were kind of settled, I was about sixteen, I guess, my daddy told us, he loved music and he said, "Now if we make seven bales of cotton this year we will buy an organ." Well, my uncle told his children if they made seven bales of cotton they would buy a buggy. When they went south some place they would pass our house in that pretty buggy with the fringe. Papa would say "I love the sound of that organ better than the sight of that buggy."

**MD:** That's a good story.

**IW:** After I started going with my husband he ordered, rather he enlisted me as a pupil in Mail Music Program, and that's the way I learned to play the organ. Then when Janice came long everybody was using piano and our organ was one of the pump kind that had gone out, so I bought a piano for her.

**MD:** Did you ever ride sidesaddle?

**IW:** I did.

**MD:** I never could understand how you could stay up there.

**IW:** Oh, it was a disgrace when I was a girl, to get straddle a horse. I had a girl, I call her my foster-sister. My daddy's oldest sister died when her daughter was about three months old and mama took her. She had lost her first baby, mama took her to take care of her and she kept her until I was born. She didn't think she could handle two, but she did later. Grandma took her then, but we were always close. She was at my house or I was at hers. One day we were going to have a party in the neighborhood and she came after me on one of their horses. Something went wrong, I don't remember now what it was, but we got off of the horse and it was so high we couldn't get back on it. There was a stump, the tree had been broken off. We should have had better sense. We got up on that stump and got in the saddle, or she did, but I slipped off. It didn't hurt me except it scared me to death.

**MD:** There were a lot of different roads down that way, wasn't there, that went to different places?

**IW:** Yes, a good many. There was a lane that went between my daddy's part of the farm and Uncle William's. Going north we would go into another settlement like. The houses were kind of scattered, but I never did get acquainted with too many of them there. Then going south it began to lead into the main part of Prairie Grove but there was a road that turned to the right that brought us to Burke. There was another road that went to the left and carried us back toward the back of my daddy's field. That led to Fillmore Ellis's house. He had one child, a boy, and he wound up being my sister, Myrtle's, boyfriend for a while. Then as we went on to Prairie Grove there would be other roads that led this way and that 'til we got to the center of the community. The main road really went to the schoolhouse. Then there was a road that led from that on down to my uncle's house.

**MD:** Do you ever remember a road that went to, you know where the Stovalls lived there, Tommy Stovall and Frank Stovall, that kind of went between their house, across the branch and went on to Emporia? Mrs. Wright was telling me about that road that went over there. You know Gussie? She said they used to go to Emporia that way.

**IW:** Now I don't remember that I ever went from the Stovall place, any road except the main road, but it came into the main public road and then it turned, like you came in this way, you turned to the left and went a little ways and then took another short road that carried you to the mill, the old mill.

**MD:** Emporia? She was telling me about that road. I didn't know anything about that, I hadn't heard that. As you went along the road, if you were going from Prairie Grove to Diboll, who were some of the people who lived along the road?

**IW:** If I can remember, there were the Massingills, the Stovalls, Tommy Stovall, which my sister married his son, one of them. They lived right on the road, just came right close to the house. There was papa's youngest brother, was close to the road after they all got settled. Seems to me like there was a Parten. He was a brother to my husband's brother

who married his sister. There was him and seems to me like, didn't one of the Glass boys live on that road?

**MD:** No, I don't think so.

**IW:** I've forgotten the names, just houses ever so often, you know. Martha Stovall married George Stovall and Frank and Tommy, Tommy lived right on the road and Frank lived that side of him and George the other side. George had just one child, a son. Frank had – he had been married three times-

**MD:** We have all those. I talked to Mrs. Wright.

**IW:** What Wright is that?

**MD:** Gussie Wright, Gussie Stovall.

**IW:** Oh yes, the Wrights lived down in there and this foster sister I spoke about married a brother to Gussie's husband. We have all been real close.

**MD:** Let's talk about the farm now and what you raised on it. Do you remember what you raised on it?

**IW:** Everything we ate. Our main crop was corn and cotton. We raised peanuts, peas, beans, potatoes, cane and anything that would come along that we could plant, you know. We had, my daddy, was always pretty considerate of us girls, working in the field and he wouldn't let us get too hot. We had a shade tree at each end of the farm. We'd sit under that tree when we should have been working. I remember an instance back when, I guess I was about fourteen, anyway, I was old enough that they gave us a job to do, I was put overseer of it. It was what we called "Mother's Day" now, was in May, about the first of May and there came a cold spell. I remember we went to church Sunday. I had made me a new dress and I felt so dressed up. That night, evening late, it began to turn cold, that night came the biggest frost and it killed every stalk of corn that had begun to joint. Tommy Stovall, my brother-in-law's daddy, had an acre, about an acre & a half, anyway a big patch, that he – during the winter he penned his cows up. In the early spring he planted the roasting ears and carried them to Diboll to sell. That corn was as high as a man's head, so pretty. When the sun came out the next day that corn just bent over. It killed the whole patch and it killed all the corn in the out field that was jointed you know, at the ends of the rows where it would grow faster. My daddy shelled a gallon bucket full of seed corn, what he thought was good seed stuff. He told us when we got it re-planted, that corn that the cold had killed, we could stop. Well, we had planted nearly all day and we still had corn. My sister, Ora, was the mischief of the family. She was all the time pulling some stunt, and she said, the corn came right up to the crawfish strip that was so crawfishy and hard. When it got dry it was like flint rock nearly, stopped there but it was wheaty on this part – she said "This corn is not going down and we won't get to quit. How about somebody running across there and falling down and spilling it." Didn't anybody agree to do it, so she went tearing cross there and fell down and spilled that

corn. In about a week there came a rain, it had been raining a little along but, that corn sprouted. Papa was down there and he saw it. He came to the house and said “I want to know who put that corn out down there. No use to stay silent, one of you did it.” Ora dropped her head and said “I did it. I don’t know why I did it but it wasn’t going down. We weren’t going to get to quit.” All he said was “I didn’t think anybody would do me like that? That was worse than a whipping.

**MD:** Did you go berry picking?

**IW:** We sure did.

**MD:** Mayhaws?

**IW:** Mayhaws, mulberries.

**MD:** They were wild mulberries?

**IW:** Yes, there were big old trees of mulberries.

**MD:** Did you ever go huckleberry picking, wild huckleberries?

**IW:** Yes, we would do that, too. That huckleberry tree, I won’t ever forget that. Two times they got into it, climbing the huckleberry tree. We had hogs, you know, running loose in the woods and my sister, Myrtle, and I, mama told us we could go down to the big mulberry tree and get some mulberries. We were picking as high as we could reach the limbs and one of these hogs came up, it turned its bristles up, you know. I ran to a little old tree about this big around, dried up and I jumped up on it and I said “Myrtle, he’s going to get my feet.” I was just complaining that he was going to get my feet and there I was swinging up on that bush. She got a stick and got after the hog and ran him off.

**MD:** What were you doing with the mulberries, just eat them or did you put them up some way?

**IW:** We never did put them up, we’d eat them. You could wash them and put them in milk or sugar or something like that. Just like you would strawberries or black berries. We would put up the blackberries, what few jars we’d pick.

**MD:** Did you do much canning in jars?

**IW:** Not during that time, people didn’t know how but, we learned later and that’s where I got into the Future Farmer Program.

**MD:** When your father killed hogs and things like that, what did he do with the meat? How did he preserve it?

**IW:** He packed it down in boxes or something with salt and corn shucks and kept it until he thought it was cured, matured. My first recollection, they didn't do this, but later on people learned that they would scald the meat in hot, you know, have a big pot, of hot water with borax in it and scald that meat in there, and hang it up and dry it, smoke dry it, and the skippers wouldn't get in it so bad. But if she didn't, I've seen my mother gather up, go to a box or whatever they had in packages, and cut a slice off of the big old hams, or the sides and there'd be those little old hairy worms all in it, they were called skippers. They learned to do that and then the next progress that I remember them doing, they learned to mix borax with syrup or sugar, just moisten the sugar if they didn't have the syrup, but most everybody had syrup then that they made and put in barrels and kept. Sometimes it would sour and you'd take the peg out to draw out some syrup and it would fly out. They learned, after they had smoked and dried it, to put a coat of this syrup and borax and flour to make it stick, you see, and cover it with that real good and then put it down in the shucks and it would stay sweet and fresh.

**MD:** What about sausage, would he smoke sausage? Did they make sausage back then, when you were a girl?

**IW:** I can't remember during my early days that they did. It was later on, we got what they called a sausage grinder and we would grind it. They cleaned the intestines of the hog to put that sausage in, and they would hang it up in the smoke house and smoke it. It was a pretty good job to get it done.

**MD:** Tell me about the syrup in the buckets, in the barrels?

**IW:** That syrup making time was a joyful time for all of us. My Granddaddy Courtney was a syrup maker. There was a creek that ran nearly the length, I don't know how far it did go, but his farm was on like this side of the creek and right on, oh about I guess as far from the syrup mill is from there to my back door, that far from the creek. They got water out of the creek and they ground the cane. They had cane patches on this area because it was good rich damp ground. We had this syrup mill there and it was run by horses, drawn by horses and the kids had to make the horses keep going, and sometimes they would get tired and they'd stop. That juice was caught in a barrel that they had cut the top off. Then it was brought by bucketfuls to the syrup evaporator, where they boiled it. When they got the syrup to a certain stage, then it was let out in a zinc cup, or another cut off barrel and put in barrels. Some of them would be twenty-five gallon barrels, some fifty gallons, just whatever you wanted. They'd take those barrels and put them in what they called their "smokehouse" where they smoked the meat. They would bore a hole in the top of the barrels and put a wooden peg in there. Then they'd set this barrel up on a scaffold, give it that tilt, you know, so the syrup would run out. If you wanted sugar, and nearly every farmer would have a barrel of sugar made.

**MD:** How would they do that?

**IW:** They would just cook the syrup until it was real thick and then when they would put it in the barrels it would go to sugar. They have to take the top of the barrel out to get the sugar then. That was the sugar we had when I was a child.

**MD:** Oh, they made it out of the cane. Would they have to pound it or anything?

**IW:** Sometimes it would be rocky, and then sometimes it would be pretty grainy. Of course, it wouldn't be like white sugar, but you could use it.

**MD:** What about flour? Did you have flour or did you have to buy your flour?

**IW:** Yes, we'd buy the flour. You could get it in a barrel if you wanted to. Back then we had no refrigeration and weevils would get in it. I don't know how they could do it but they did. Sometimes the farmers would buy a barrel of flour together and divide it. I can just see one of those barrels today. It would be what they called fifty gallon barrels. They weren't painted, they were just made out of some kind of light colored wood. Then we got to where we could buy the flour by the fifty pound sack. And every sack was taken care of just like it was good to eat because they made clothes out of them.

**MD:** Yes, sheets and a lot of other things.

**IW:** As time came on, we got to where we could buy it in smaller packages and, finally, in colored sacks, print sacks and everybody was proud of that sack. I think about the prettiest blouse that Janice had when she was growing up was made out of feed sacks – just the prettiest print. Nobody knew it was flour sacks, or feed sacks.

**MD:** Yes, they were pretty. Did you ever see anybody make lye soap? How would they make lye soap?

**IW:** They saved the fat cracklings from the, you know when they would kill a hog, or a cow, they didn't kill a cow very often. They'd save every little scarp of fat from the hogs and put that fat in a wash pot and cook it until those cracklings, that fat that came to the top, brown cracklings. They strained that grease and put it in containers and they'd take care of those cracklings. They would get a can of lye. You could buy cans at the stores and you put so much water in there with those cracklings and the lye would eat all that cracklings up and then when it got cold it would be firm just like a bar of soap. We'd cut it, you know.

**MD:** Did you ever see anybody make the lye that they used? Did your family ever make lye soap with ashes and water?

**IW:** Yes. I remember my mother had what they called the ash barrel. They'd burn a certain kind of an oak, red oak I believe it was, and they saved the ashes. They'd put it in this barrel and pour so much water over it, then put it on a scaffold, tilt it up and put a vessel to catch that and that was the lye that they made. I don't know how people lived back then.

**MD:** Couldn't go to the store and buy everything, could you?

**IW:** My kids think I'm going to kill myself because I use old time remedies.

**MD:** Before we get to the old time remedies, what about the fruit trees, did you have a big orchard?

**IW:** Not a great big on, we had a big plum orchard. That didn't take much care. Every farmer had enough fruit trees, peaches, pears – that was the main thing for their own use. They had a peach tree they called an "Indian Peach." They were red and mama could make the best pickles out of them.

**MD:** Did they ever dry their fruit, did you ever see anybody drying their fruit?

**IW:** Yes, we'd dry them.

**MD:** How did they dry them?

**IW:** They just sliced it – peeled it and sliced it into thin slices and put it out in the sun. It was dried, they could tell the temperature or the quality of it and knew about when it was dry. Another thing I've seen my grandmother do, is to – they had lots of milk and she'd put it in a clean, when it clabbered, put it in a clean flour sack and hang it out in the air and let every bit of water drain out and it made good cottage cheese.

**MD:** Oh yes. Did she ever make the other kind of cheese, the yellow cheese, did they do that?

**IW:** Not that I know of.

**MD:** What kind of coffee, did you buy coffee or did you make it?

**IW:** They would buy what they called green coffee and parch it, you know, in the oven. Then everybody had a coffee mill. They'd put it in there and grind it and make their coffee.

**MD:** You couldn't buy it already ground, could you?

**IW:** I don't know, I figure they didn't because I was way up, getting towards grown before I saw any bought ground coffee. I had two coffee mills. We still would buy the green coffee and grind it because it was a little cheaper that way.

**MD:** What about salt, did you buy your salt or did you ever go to a salt lick, or did you just buy your salt? Did you ever hear of people going and getting their own salt at a salt lick?

**IW:** No, I don't remember that I did. They might have before I was old enough to notice.

**MD:** Your grandmother, did she have a spinning wheel to spin her yarn?

**IW:** I can't remember my Grandma Courtney having one but my mother's mother had one and I've helped her spin thread. My mama would spin thread. She'd have cards that carded the blimps out of the cotton, then fix it in little rolls to spin it. We had the spinning wheel for years.

**MD:** Your mother made thread that way? Then she could use the thread on the sewing machine?

**IW:** Oh, not that little. They could use it for crocheting, knitting, and so many things they used it for.

**MD:** This was courser thread? You helped her do that?

**IW:** I wish I knew what happened to that spinning wheel, mama had it for a long time, but I can't remember what happened to it.

**MD:** Where did you get your water?

**IW:** When we lived in Polk County we had a well in our front yard. It was sixty feet deep. That's where we got our water for everything, washing, cooking, bathing.

**MD:** You would draw it out of the well?

**IW:** Yes, and mama would put milk in a bucket and tie up, close around it and let it down in the well and it would stay so cool and it was so good for supper. One day she went to get her milk and there was a snake coiled on top of it. That snake went over the curb. How it got in there we didn't know but it turned her against the milk.

**MD:** When you moved to Prairie Grove, did you have cisterns?

**IW:** We had cisterns because the water in most of Angelina County was what they called hard. Some of it you could hardly make soap lather in it and you didn't like to drink it, so we had cisterns. During the summer those cisterns, most of the time, we'd use all the water out of them, and there was a spring from – oh, that spring was about five miles from our house. My daddy would put two or three fifty-gallon barrels in the wagon and go to the spring and haul those barrels full of water to our house. Mama would save every bit of the wash water, put it in troughs on the outside for the hogs that were running outside, or she would water the plants with some of it, there wasn't a grain of it wasted.

**MD:** Did you ever go to the spring to wash, did you ever take your clothes over there and wash?

**IW:** Not that I remember, of course there was no place to hang them, you know. Papa would go get it and bring enough to wash in.

**MD:** Tell me about some home remedies you used?

**IW:** My children laugh at me. There is one home remedy we used was coal oil, you know, that you burn in the lamps. If you got a sting or, especially a snake bite, or something like that, well, you smoked that area in coal oil and turpentine, you could buy turpentine in bottles, but if you didn't have it we used, and I can remember that my daddy would tell my mother, he'd say "Emmie, are we out of turpentine? Well, I'll go out there and chop a pine and let some of the rosin run out." They would take that rosin and mix it with cow tallow and make a poltice for their backs. They would often strain a back in their work and then sometimes when they'd – children would have what they called "croup," they'd put a plaster of it on his chest. I guess it worked, nobody ever died from it. Another thing they drank sassafras tea in the spring to help malaria or something; I don't know exactly what it did but they said it was a good cure. Another remedy they had was peach tree leaves poltices for irritations. Sometimes children would get poison ivy on their hands. They'd boil the leaves and then crush them up good and put meal in it to make the water thick to put a poltice on.

**MD:** That was for poison ivy?

**IW:** Yes, or sometime we would get a break out, we wouldn't know what. And another thing they used was you'd break a peach tree limb, strip the leaves off and for diarrhea you'd scrape the bark up and boil it and drink the tea. And for vomiting, you scraped it down.

**MD:** Oh, that's a good one.

**IW:** Oh, there were so many.

**MD:** Would you tell me something about a kernel?

**IW:** Peach tree kernel? They saved every one and back then we'd have something they called "yellow jaundice." They claimed, well, they did it, they'd crack those seed and get that kernel out and feed them to you. And evidently it worked or they wouldn't have kept doing it.

**MD:** What about Mullen, did they ever use Mullen? Did you ever hear of that?

**IW:** I've heard of it but I don't remember my mother ever using it. One thing is, you've seen or heard about bamboo briar? Well, they claim that is good for burns and we had, on our farm they were just scattered around. When we lived in Polk County it was real cold. And our house was a good sturdy house but it was just made out of planks, 1 x 12 boards, it wasn't sealed and the floors were out of plank, no covering on it. When it was freezing weather you can't imagine how little heat you got from the fireplace. So my mother was

warming a quilt by the fire to put on the bed to put the little ones on, putting them to bed. My little brother, about two and a half years old, came running through the house and up to that quilt and fell over into the fire with his little hands and it just burned them. That's what mama did for him, she sent me, the next morning, down to the path where they grew, big old leaves like that, I brought back a bunch of them and she just laid them down and rolled them until they were soft and watery like and put on his hands. Drove that fire out.

**MD:** And what was the name of it?

**IW:** Bamboo briar, they grew up – oh, they had a pretty good size stem but they didn't have a lot of thorns like a regular briar and the leaves were scattered on. But the leaves were large and open with a stem and that's what the Indians had used.

**MD:** Yes, it was just handed down from one generation to another.

**IW:** I think I told you that I gave my grandson those recipes and he carried, they call me "Tootsie." He said, "Tootsie, I just need two seeds." Of course, he would be up on the stage thanking them, you know, and it just amazed them all. Went out there to that tree and I said "Now, Judson, I've a tree out there with some rosin on it, about the quality we'd use back then, He went out there and pulled off a wad from that tree. I had some tallows and I gave him a little of the tallow to mix with it.

**MD:** Did you have any doctors out that way, did they come out from Burke, or Diboll or Lufkin when you really needed somebody?

**IW:** When we lived in Polk County, the first doctor I ever knew was Dr. Cook, and he was, oh, I'd say about forty years old when I knew him.

**MD:** Is he the Doctor Cook that later came to Diboll?

**IW:** I guess. His son came to Diboll and that was the only doctor we had, except sometimes a dentist. During that time we didn't have a dentist in town. There was one that would go through, just travel in this buggy, to the different communities, taking care of the tooth problems, and he was the first one that ever pulled a tooth for me. That was when I was pretty young.

**MD:** Was that in Polk County?

**IW:** Yes, that was in Polk County but now the family, so many Polk County people came to Angelina and they came to Diboll while we were living there and he was my doctor in Diboll.

**MD:** The first time you ever saw Diboll, can you remember what it looked like?

**IW:** It looked pretty small. Mrs. Farrington worked in the store and she had a hat section in the store.

**MD:** About what year would you say that was?

**IW:** Let's see, it must have been about 1913 or somewhere along there. I know I had a friend, Avie Cook that was about my age, and we both went over there and bought us a spring hat.

**MD:** Was that after you were married?

**IW:** No, that was when I was just a girl. I guess I was about fifteen. We got hats exactly alike and didn't know it. We'd be out and her little brothers would come along and think they were talking to her and it'd be me and right reverse, I remember that so well.

**MD:** She also had the women's department?

**IW:** She worked in the dry goods department, but she had a hat section and you could go over there and buy spring hats or fall hats.

**MD:** Did she decorate the hats, do you know?

**IW:** I think she did, some of them, the plain ones, some of them. But back then you didn't go to church without a hat on your head. I always got a new hat to wear to the association and a spring hat for the spring Easter time.

**MD:** What was the association, what was that?

**IW:** Unity, I believe, the Baptist called it the Unity Association. My daddy never missed one.

**MD:** Where did they have those, different places?

**IW:** Different churches. They would have one at the Damascus Church and we would always go. My daddy would hitch the horses to the wagon and we would go. Sometimes it would be at the church here in Angelina, Pine Grove Church would have them and different places.

**MD:** What did the houses look like in Diboll, the way you remember the first houses?

**IW:** Well, to me, you now, living in the country, they looked pretty nice. I always thought of Diboll as a kind of "first class" place because things were sort of kept in order. I remember one special thing, after I was married, that in World War I. You know we were getting reports that we were losing the war, and Woodrow Wilson called the whole nation to prayer. Everywhere a person was at twelve o'clock, they stopped for prayer. The mill, the sawmill, when twelve o'clock came, they blew the whistle and everything

stopped everywhere...when the boys came home, it wasn't very long after then when we won the war, and they came home. Dank Landrum, a friend of ours, was a single man and he was telling us that our forces, they were fighting this battle that was on kind of a hill, and our forces would come up like water waves over the hill, and they would mow them down just like grass. He said, "All at once the tide turned and they won it." When he got home, they checked it out and it was on the day that the nation stopped for prayer. That may not fit in with what you want.

**MD:** Yes, if that is one thing you remember about Diboll. Everything stopped?

**IW:** The people were friendly, we hardly ever heard of any dirt going on, you know, any bad things.

**MD:** When you and Mr. Waltman married, did you move to Diboll? When did you live in Diboll?

**IW:** We married on the fourteenth – no, on the twenty-first day of March and the first place we went was to the Beulah Church. We were married that morning at the Beulah Methodist Church. We came back, we spent that night with my mother and daddy and the next morning we got up, mama helped me gather all my clothes and everything and we moved in the house with his parents and stayed about six months. His daddy had a house he had been renting but it became vacant and we moved into it.

**MD:** Was it located outside of Diboll?

**IW:** You know where Ryans Chapel Church is? Well, there is a – you know where one of the roads you turn by the church and go by the cemetery and turn and cross a branch? We lived just past that branch a little ways.

**MD:** You lived in the Ryans Chapel community?

**IW:** There was a spring at the bottom of that branch and we got water there a lot of times when the cisterns would both dry up. We stayed there, my first child was born in that rent house and the next year we built a house of our own, just across the road from this house. My second son was born in that house. Janice was born at Diboll when we were in business.

**MD:** What kind of business were you in?

**IW:** Well, you might say general – groceries, dry goods and shoes, just whatever.

**MD:** Where was it located? The north part of Diboll or the south?

**IW:** You know, let me see now, a Mrs. Holloway. You know where their business was? Well, ours was right beside theirs.

**MD:** Up in Copestown?

**IW:** Yes, and we bought it from, I can't think of his name, an older man, you know, retired. Somebody set it afire one night. We had a big tin cistern at the back of the house that we caught water in and we had a feed store back of the main store to an apartment but we hadn't moved in it at the time. It was kind of an old skating rink upstairs. One morning somebody had drained all the water out of it. We thought it was just kids, you know. The next morning about – after twelve o'clock sometime I got up, our bedroom window was where you could see out. He said he heard something unusual down there, well, he went to the front of the building to see and he said, "Oh, I believe the store is on fire." We ran down there and got the safe out and an adding machine but we lost everything.

**MD:** You said the old skating rink, did they used the skate up in the top of that building?

**IW:** Yes, I said they skated up there, I won't be for sure. I know there were apartments made up there after they quit using it as a skating rink. But we lived upstairs.

**MD:** After Janice was born?

**IW:** It was before Janice was born, some time.

**MD:** When you lived at home, how did you celebrate Christmas?

**IW:** Papa would go to town and get a few apples and oranges and candy. We would hang our stockings up by the fireplace and they would put it in them. Mama would cook up what she had, you know, usually she made chicken dressing, potato pies, baked potatoes. Sometimes she would make syrup pies, what we could call syrup pies, just what we had on the farm that she could scrape up.

**MD:** Children didn't get fruit very often, did they?

**IW:** No, that was a luxury at Christmas. Papa would go to town, drive to Burke, usually he would go on Saturday, to get corn to grind into meal or to get plow stuff, whatever we really needed. He would always bring us back a nickel's worth of stick candy, it would be peppermint. He would get ten sticks of peppermint, six inches long for a nickel. They were half a penny apiece and we'd meet him running as hard as we could up the road to get that candy. They would give him gifts there. Miss Ina McCall was the storekeeper at that time. I think I've got a little bowl here that we got as a premium. That was before I married and, I don't know how much longer but everybody that traded there, traded so much got a little glass bowl, pitcher or something. I know when I was eighteen, my daddy gave me what he got for trading so much there for a birthday present. It was a little glass, green glass pitcher. It has always been a prize to me.

[END OF INTERVIEW]