

JACK DEVEREAUX

Interview 238a

October 5, 2011, at The History Center, Diboll, Texas

Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer

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ABSTRACT: In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, Diboll native Jack Devereaux reminisces about growing up in Diboll, playing baseball, and attending school. Born in 1915, Mr. Devereaux played baseball as a child, in school for Diboll High School, and for the Diboll Millers. He mentions E.H. Bush, Joe Strauss, Morris Agee, Connie Albritton, Rankin Weatherby, and Frosty Davis. He also talks about his father, Dred Devereaux and his building projects for Southern Pine Lumber Company and the Texas Southeastern Railroad. Mr. Devereaux reminisces about some teenaged adventures in the various cars he owned, working for the TSE, and visiting family in various parts of East Texas.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): Today's date is October 5, 2011. My name is Jonathan Gerland and I'm at The History Center with Mr. Jack Devereaux and we're going to do an oral history interview today. He has already been telling us some of his baseball stories so, maybe let's...he was telling me he was born in 1915 and just tell us about some of your earliest memories about playing baseball.

Jack Devereaux (hereafter JD): You want me to tell that one I just got through.

JG: If that is where you want to start that will be good. Just talk about playing baseball in early Diboll.

JD: Well that is early Diboll team in them days. When we were all around fourteen or fifteen years old and we had three divisions of baseball. One was called Snuffy and from Snuffy to a big two story grocery store up there in Copestown then that was called the Roberts Hotel in them days and then from Snuffy's to there was called Silk Socks baseball team and then from there on up was Copestown. So, every Saturday we had three teams playing each other.

JG: Now, how old were you when this was going on?

JD: I was fourteen years old.

JG: Okay, so this would have been about the late twenties then, late twenties, early thirties.

JD: Yes.

JG: Okay so you had three teams in Diboll playing?

JD: Three teams in Diboll playing in them days.

JG: Who did y'all play?

JD: We played each other about every day.

JG: Did you ever play any other teams from outside?

JD: No, no, they didn't have the money to come play Diboll in them days and we didn't have money to go play them.

JG: Now what about the adults, did the adult teams play other people?

JD: Not in them days that I know of. They probably had the Diboll Millers or something like that, but I don't recall them.

JG: What about in school, did you have a school baseball team?

JD: Yes sir, we won the state tournament in 1932. E. H. Bush was the coach then. We had a ball team that nobody could beat in those days. We were all in the sixteen, seventeen and eighteen year class. We had...I'll just name you the players we had in those days. We had Jumbo Hill was catching. Eugene Baker was a pitcher. Morris Agee was a pitcher. Gilbert Hill was a centerfielder and a pitcher. Jack Devereaux was first base. Lenny Kee Larkin was second base. Guy Nelly was third base. Rankin Weatherby was third base. J. B. Jackson was right field. Gilbert Hill was in centerfield when he wasn't pitching and Joe Strauss was in left field and we had one or two players that was... Cotton Albritton, he would come once in awhile and play with us. That was the team in them days.

JG: What teams did you play? What are some of the teams that you would have played?

JD: We played, in those days we didn't have leagues even in big schools. In 1932 we had a team that we played San Augustine, Timpson, Tenaha and Center and Corrigan and Diboll. That was...we were all in our teens in those days in high school. We had 1932, well Morris Frank, he was a big sports man in those days from Lufkin, he got John Reagan and they were class 5A in those days, now.

JG: John Reagan High School in class 5A?

JD: Yes, in Houston.

JG: Okay.

JD: And he got them to come up here to play us in Diboll in 1932. And we, Eugene Baker was pitching that day and John Reagan beat us, that was on a Friday, beat us 5-3. The next day we were going to play a double header, going to have two out of three. Coot Agee or Morris Agee, that was his nickname, "Coot" we called him, he pitched that game and pitched a two hitter. We never will forget it. We beat them 6-0 and after the game John Reagan packed up and went back to Houston they didn't want Diboll to beat them the next day.

JG: They wanted to leave it as draw huh?

JD: Morris Frank wrote a big article about that.

JG: Now you mentioned those games were on Friday and then Saturday, was that typical? When were your games usually played?

JD: No, our games was on high school days in those days.

JG: So afternoons?

JD: In the afternoons. I'll tell you one game that I never will forget, as I said I was playing first base and Rankin Weatherby he was crazy about it, he was a good ball player, he was a good third baseman. He always liked to play and on March 5, 1932 we had...yeah 1932, we had a little snow here and we were supposed to play San Augustine over here. San Augustine called and wanted to know how the weather was over there and they might not call it. Rankin said, "oh it's good." Bush wasn't there so Rankin Weatherby took over on the phone and told them the weather was fine. "It's real good here, the sun is coming out." But we got to playing, they came over here and it started snowing and I never will forget, I was first baseman and about the fourth or fifth inning somebody built a fire over by first base, built a big bonfire over there and it was cold so and I went over and warmed up and I wasn't paying no attention to the ballgame and after awhile somebody hauled off and kicked me in the rear end and told me, "what in the world you doing over here we got one man out and here you are over here warming." That was Bush, he told me, "get down there." That was something playing in the snow.

JG: So you were warming up by the fire and not playing on the field.

JD: Yes, I was warming up and not paying any attention to that ballgame.

JG: So where were the games played in Diboll, the school games, where were they played?

JD: We played in the Diboll Park, the regular baseball field over there years ago. Which the bank is on the ground now back through there and there was...

JG: Over here behind us?

JD: Yes, behind the bank over there.

JG: That is where the high school games were played?

JD: Where the football field is these days, yes, we played there. Then we played in Corrigan.

JG: Where would those games be played? Were they where the schools were or were they separated?

JD: They were where the schools were, in Corrigan, San Augustine, Tenaha and Timpson and Center they were all pretty close to the schools them days.

JG: So say Timpson if y'all were playing Timpson what time would the game time have been to play Timpson? What time in the afternoon did y'all play?

JD: We played after school. Well, a lot of times we would leave around noon and start the game around 2 and 3 o'clock in the afternoon.

JG: Okay, so you would go to school and leave at noon and drive there. How would you go on buses or cars?

JD: Oh, we went in the school bus would carry us there.

JG: So, everybody was on the same bus, the whole team?

JD: The whole team with the coach.

JG: Talk a little bit about E. H. Bush. You mentioned him a few times, tell about him.

JD: E. H. Bush was a great baseball player. In fact, he married my double first cousin, Minnie Jackson, little Minnie we called her. He was a great coach. He even played in the big leagues in them days. He coached here when I was even a freshman to about '36 I believe when he left Diboll. He went to Lufkin and was coaching up there for awhile. But Bush, he was a great ball player. He played with the Diboll Millers in those days and they had one good team, which I played with them too on the town team. You've got pictures of that.

JG: Yes sir. So, when did you play for the Millers? You said that in the late twenties there weren't really any adult teams around but after you got out of high school in '32 they had some.

JD: They had some, and they had even a lot of town teams before my time in the Diboll Millers in them days.

JG: But, they just weren't active when you were in school, okay. We'll talk a little bit about the Millers then when you started playing with them. Was that right after high school you started playing with them?

JD: Yes, they were right after high school, probably started...I was in Stephen F. Austin in...I was playing with them in '36 to '41 for the Diboll Miller team.

JG: Did you play ball at SFA [Stephen F. Austin]?

JD: Frosty Davis was manager in them days and we had...

JG: Excuse me Mr. Devereaux, did you say you went to SFA in college?

JD: Yes, one year.

JG: Just one year okay.

JD: I had a scholarship there to play baseball and basketball.

JG: Okay, a baseball scholarship and a basketball scholarship, okay.

JD: Yes, I played basketball when Diboll had a basketball team. That is when Fenner Roth, he was coach in basketball in them days.

JG: Well, talk a little bit about that, about getting that scholarship and playing at college.

JD: Well I had a scholarship there playing baseball and basketball and I went there one year and I had a scholarship again but then I had an offer down here in Diboll in them days with TSE [Texas South Eastern].

JG: The railroad.

JD: The railroad. They wanted me to come back up there and I said I can't come back I got a job and that ended my career with Stephen F. Austin. I started working for TSE.

JG: I'd like to ask you a little bit about the railroad stuff also but let me ask you now about playing baseball for SFA. You actually played one season with them?

JD: One season.

JG: What position did you play?

JD: Shortstop and from then on out when I got out of college I was playing shortstop for the Diboll Millers in them days.

JG: So, you went from first base to shortstop?

JD: Yes, I was short stop all the time then.

JG: Yes, but you were first baseman in high school, yes.

JD: Yes, then Frosty sent me down to Beaumont to try out with the Beaumont Exporters. In those days they were a Texas League and Al Vinson he was the coach in Beaumont in them days. He had me out there which I wasn't very heavy, I didn't weigh but about 148 pounds and I could play that short stop all right and he knew it. He kept me down there one week and he told me he said "Devereaux I've never seen anything like it. You can field, but your weight you can't hit your weight." I said, "no sir I sure can't not with them big guys out there pitching." He said, "I'm going to give you a diet to get on and you come back here next year." He said, "when you get to around 160 pounds on this you come on back down here." I stayed with the Diboll Millers. I couldn't never get to 146 pounds.

JG: What was the diet? Do you remember what the diet was? What did he have you eating?

JD: Al Vinson?

JG: To try to get your weight up what did he have you eating?

JD: Well he had me drinking lots of milk, and protein but I never could.

JG: What was your batting average, at SFA what was your batting average, do you remember?

JD: I had an average of around .316 to .320 in those days.

JG: Well that is good, but you couldn't do it in Beaumont.

JD: I couldn't...them guys could throw that ball and it looked like an aspirin coming at you in them Texas Leagues in them days.

JG: So, just the level of competition was a lot better.

JD: Oh yes.

JG: A lot better pitching.

JD: They were bigger and better. But I never will forget also with the Diboll Millers we used to go to the prison over here and play.

JG: In Huntsville?

JD: No, the Millers, the town team.

JG: And where?

JD: When I was playing with the town team. You got a picture of them, you got that one.

JG: Yes.

JD: Well it showed all them, Frosty Davis and Preacher Blackburn and Jumbo Hill and the Reynolds boys from Lufkin. They played for Diboll in them days.

JG: I misunderstood you I thought you said the prison.

JD: Yes, we went over to the prison and played a couple of times but the last time, I'm telling you this about Louis's daddy...

JG: Son Landers?

JD: ...Son Landers, he was a pitcher and he was a good one. We went over there one time and old Son was pitching and I was shortstop and we had a Diboll Millers and Frosty Davis he was still managing our team and Son, we got out there and got to playing and one of those prisoners came up and Son hit him, hit him in the back and that prisoner shook that bat at him. And, it was a coincidence the next time he came up to bat again Son hit him again and he throwed a bat at him and the bat came way out to shortstop where I was playing and I picked the bat up and carried it back up and Son came over there and said, "let me have that bat" and I said, "no Son, don't get in no trouble." He said, "let me have that bat" and he took the bat from me and hauled off and throwed it at that prisoner and he said...man them prisoners in the stands they were hollering and raising cane...said the guards came out and got us out of there quick. That was one game.

JG: Oh boy!

JD: Old Son was a good pitcher.

JG: I heard he was.

JD: I talked to Louis about him and he doesn't remember ever having his daddy named Son, but that is what we called him Son.

JG: Yes, everybody called him Son. Tell me a little bit more about when the Millers would travel. How did y'all travel?

JD: We traveled in a bus, in the school bus, the Diboll Millers. A lot of times we didn't go on the school bus we didn't...I had my car or daddy's car rather and some of the other boys I think they had their car. And we used to travel. We went two or three times over right before the start of the World War II over there at Bossier City, Louisiana one time. I was driving there and we come back and all of us stopped and got a bunch of beers there

and was drinking and resting there and then the Tidings were running the place there and we had to get out of there 'cause a lot of trouble was starting with them baseball fellows. The Tidings had just joined the army too. But, we traveled lots of times in buses though.

JG: Was there a name of the league that ya'll were in all these teams?

JD: No, it wasn't any league.

JG: Wasn't any league.

JD: It was just...we played in those days we played Port Neches, we played Texas City. They all had teams too, in town you know.

JG: Now Texas City had a Texas League team didn't they?

JD: Yes.

JG: Ya'll didn't play the same team did you?

JD: No they were just like us up here in Diboll just town team. And, then we had teams up in San Augustine and we had a real good team we played in Pineland, Texas. They were a town down there and we played here one month and we would go over there and play one.

JG: Yes, I was going to ask you about sawmill towns like Pineland and maybe Kelty's. Did Manning have a team?

JD: That was way before my time. They did have a team then but not when I was playing.

JG: What about like Trinity and Groveton did they have a team when you played?

JD: They didn't have one. It was all kind of like San Augustine and Center, Timpson, Pineland, and once in awhile over in Louisiana, a lot of teams there.

JG: What about Lufkin, they had a few teams didn't they?

JD: Lufkin didn't have a team in those days when the Diboll Millers were playing. The boys from Lufkin were playing with us.

JG: Okay.

JD: O. V. Runnels and Dave Runnels they were brothers to Pete Runnels and Pete Runnels played for the Boston Red Socks for years. He played when Ted Williams was playing with them, Pete was.

JG: Now, I know the Lufkin Foundry had a team and a few of those industries up there but that was later?

JG: Yes.

JG: You're talking about the thirties right?

JD: You talking about the Foundry was that a softball or...?

JG: I don't know that is what I'm wondering.

JD: They never did have baseball that I knew of.

JG: Softball okay.

JD: In those days I don't know why they didn't have a team until later on. Morris Frank in his later days, he got a team going and then we had our team here in Diboll and we played them in late forty six, forty-five and forty-six we played Lufkin in them days.

JG: Who came to the games as the fans and things, who watched the games? Were there bleachers and stuff for the fans?

JD: Here?

JG: Well here and other towns that you went to.

JD: Very few people out there in them days.

JG: Really?

JD: We had a pretty good little crowd here in Diboll when Frosty was coach here.

JG: What days of the week were the games played?

JD: On Saturday and Sundays.

JG: Okay, was there ever any trouble playing on Sundays?

JD: No.

JG: I guess the games were in the afternoons?

JD: Yes, Sunday afternoons. Yes, them was the days I tell you. There all gone though, everyone of them.

JG: All the players, huh?

JD: All the players are gone. When I was...you got a flag in there of Jim Fuller of that bicycle race we had here years ago.

JG: Yes, you're talking about the YMCA thing huh?

JD: Yes.

JG: The bicycle race between Lufkin and Diboll?

JD: Yes, the bicycle race with them.

JG: That was in '29 wasn't it?

JD: Yes, in 1929. I was fourteen years old then. I was looking at that the other day and you know it is not a one living except me.

JG: What he is talking about for the recording was Diboll boys and Lufkin boys raced each other from the railroad stations I guess, or the depots, Lufkin raced to Diboll and Diboll raced to Lufkin and the agents communicated with the telegraph or phones I guess. Tell us a little bit about that, the race.

JD: Well, we had in those days as I say they gave a time to start and everything and I think we beat them a minute and twenty some odd seconds.

JG: It was a relay race wasn't it?

JD: Yes, a relay race. We left at the same time and each one had to go to each...we had to go to the depot in Lufkin and they had to go to the depot in Diboll to see which one wins. I had a real good...we all had one mile ride apiece and I had the best one of all of them. I had Hoshall hill going all the way down there boy.

JG: Downhill huh?

JD: Yes, and Lufkin had to come up...when I had my ride going down Hoshall see well a cousin of mine from Lufkin he was coming up Hoshall Hill but he wasn't on the bicycle he was pushing it coming up the hill. It was steep in them old days, Hoshall Hill.

JG: If I'm not mistaken Lufkin is a higher altitude than Diboll is anyways so ya'll had to go uphill. Lufkin was coming downhill.

JD: Yes, but it was...I had that Hoshall hill and in those days it was two old bicycles and one of them was mine and one of them was Doug Barnum's. They were Hawthorn Flyers is what the bicycles name was and now we were going down one place and...

JG: Did it have soft tires, inflatable tires?

JD: Yes, we had to rotate those bicycles back and forth.

JG: But they had inflatable tires right, soft rubber?

JD: Yes, we were going down one place I think it was...I believe it was, let's see, Doug Barnum I think was on his there and the chain came off and we lost a little time there. We had to throw another bicycle there for him until we repaired that one. But, that was some race and I think the last one that I knew was in there too was old Edwin Nelson and Kenneth Nelson's. You had a picture of them didn't you?

JG: Yes sir, yes sir. Talk a little bit about your father. I understand he cleared one of the earliest baseball fields in town. Do you know where that would have been?

JD: That was the Diboll Millers, was the same place over here at the old bank, where the bank is, behind the bank where the football field is or used to be.

JG: On the other side of the creek?

JD: He built that baseball and built that whole fence around it with number five one by twelve lumber, the whole thing. Then on Saturday and Sunday we had to get the diamond, the ground infield, we had to get it smooth because it would get a little bit rough practicing every evening but right before a ballgame in the morning Frosty and Daddy was over there and had to hook it onto a truck and it had a big railroad iron you had to drag it with that truck all the way around to smooth it down so it would be just right to play on Saturday and Sunday.

JG: Well tell us a little bit about your father. You were born you said March 3, 1915, tell us a little bit about your father.

JD: Well Daddy he was, as I say we lived right down on Snuffy in those days and he...finally there was one guy that I think got out of Diboll and then they moved Daddy right there on First Street in Diboll now. What is that Hines Street now?

JG: I think so.

JD: Daddy in the mornings he had a section crew in Diboll and then one in Blix and one in Fastrill and one in Flagstaff...no Fastrill.

JG: Yes, Fastrill.

JD: Fastrill, and he would get up early in the morning around four o'clock and start calling them, cranking that telephone there. Had certain numbers they had to ring on that to get different ones. He would start in the mornings checking on them all what to do the next day and find out what they need and everything. That was his first thing. And then he'd start in the mornings going out and he started...I remember I was about ten or

twelve years old and he was out at Gilbert. He was building this bridge at Gilbert crossing the Neches.

JG: Yes Gilbert was a station just this side of the river in Angelina County.

JD: Right below Blix where the railroad went to Lufkin it went on down about three miles from Blix. And, he had them building this bridge across there, the river.

JG: I think that was in about '25 or so right?

JD: Yes.

JG: They rebuilt it.

JD: Yes, way back in about '24 or '25. Yes, I believe it was in '25 building that and all they had in those days were an old pile driver...

JG: Pile driver.

JD: ...drilling those and how they got them things that way, drove them things and built that bridge like they did without all this...nothing but number 2 shovels in them days you had. He had about on that job he had about 20 to 25 men and had section cars for them to stay in on a side track there at Gilbert while they were building that bridge. It took them about a year or two years to build that.

JG: Actually they were replacing an earlier one because they had first crossed that bridge I guess about 1907 or so and so he was rebuilding it I guess with treated timbers and everything.

JD: Well I never did know anything about another railroad out there then in that early days. I thought they were building that road there then across there, maybe they did have one on down there further. I don't know.

JG: Well they had gone to Fastrill by '22. They were all the way up to Fastrill by '22. Of course Gilbert and Alcedo was the name of the post office there. That was all during the teens and of course 1907 they had the camps there at what became Rayville Camp One and Camp Two. So, they had already crossed it but, that was the first substantial, basically he was rebuilding the earlier one that was there. Now did you go out there? You were about ten years old then right?

JD: Yes I was pretty young. I can't remember a lot of that stuff.

JG: Nine or ten or so.

JD: But, I remember that he had nearly all of them in them days had them overalls on there. They have got a big picture of all of them there.

JG: Yes sir. Do you remember were there many Hispanics, any Mexican workers do you remember in the track crews and things at that time?

JD: Yes, I remember Clarence Walker he was his section foreman and I remember Cecil Hogue he was one of the men that worked for daddy for years. A lot of them was from Apple Springs too, around there. That was Duke Fairchild, Charlie Bateman, and Clayton Kelley, Johnny Ray, and Joe Bob Hendricks. Joe Bob Hendricks he worked for Daddy. I never will forget the reason Joe Bob Hendricks was ever came to Diboll, Daddy was out there building railroads out from Fastrill in them days, new ones. They had bought some timber out that way and he was out there building a bridge there and Joe Bob Hendricks was a real good man. He was young and muscled up. He was really...Daddy thought lots of him because he was real...but, I never will forget the day they had a big hotel there...

JG: At Fastrill?

JD: ...at Fastrill where all of them stayed there and they would get up about oh three and four o'clock in the morning and then come down for breakfast and boy I never saw people eat. Had them fried eggs and biscuits and gravy, I never seen. Joe Bob was a terrible eater, he would just rake all his eggs. But, Joe Bob he thought lots of him and when he finished that job all out there well I never...do you remember him?

JG: No, just the name.

JD: Dick Hendrick's brother. Well Joe Bob...Daddy told them all load up here, we are going to have to go in the next morning after they finished out there with the bridges, so we got to go in. And in those days I forgot to tell you too, Daddy had an old dog, he was a hound dog named Bob and wherever Daddy went Bob was right behind him. When Daddy would stop and scratch his head or get mad Bob was sitting down behind him. He was even out in Fastrill with Daddy all the time and he would go down to the market and buy them old soup bones and give Bob them old soup bones there. I never will forget that. When he was out at Fastrill with Daddy he would ride the motor car. He had about ten or twelve or fifteen men on them push cars and things and on the motor car. Cecil Hogue was his operator running them motor cars in those days and I never will forget he told them all, he called everybody in them days souls, let's go souls or something. And the next morning he told them all, "let's go souls we got to go back to Diboll." Joe Bob came out there he wanted to come to Diboll. He was living in Fastrill. And Daddy said, I'll never forget, Daddy said "Joe Bob I can't take you I got more men right now than I need I just don't need you any more Joe Bob." Joe Bob said, "oh Mr. Devereaux let me go with you" and he said "Joe Bob I just can't do it." So, Daddy said "let's go Cecil crank her up" and Joe Bob was sitting out there with his little satchel there and all his clothes and he cranked it up and started on down there and Daddy stopped him and said, "wait a minute" hollered back there "come on here Joe Bob." And that is the reason Joe Bob first came to Diboll. I know you've heard of him building all these streets in town. That is when Joe Bob started working for Southern Pine in them days.

JG: Of course your father was over the bridges and buildings department is who we are talking about for the recording.

JD: Yes, he was building and everything they wanted out around the sawmill. He was always building out around there and contracting work too. I never will forget, they told about that one time, I was in Arizona I think when this happened or Groveton. I done forgot but I think I was in Arizona when they had a shop, they were tearing the shop down and they had all this concrete tearing it and they had some guys out of Lufkin, contractors tearing it up. They were going to rebuild the place there and they came down there and little Arthur Temple told them, Arthur said...Mr. Temple said, "we just can't do it, we just can't tear it up, it just won't give away that concrete and stuff." He said, "well I didn't think about it but its railroad iron and DD put that railroad iron in everything he built." And he did too...he said, "I'll tell you what just build over it." And, that is what they did.

JG: Just build on top of it huh? Well you were talking about his dog named Bob, what about his dog named Mr. Jones? Your daughter Paula did the statue for us.

JD: That was Mr. Jones after Bob. That was little Eden, he just passed away about three or four weeks ago in Preston Arizona, that was his dog and he brought him up there and give him to Daddy and Mr. Jones he followed Daddy for many a year too. Every Sunday Daddy would go down to the market and get soup bones and things for Mr. Jones and Bob in them days. Mr. Cruthirds he was market man in them days.

JG: Now, you worked some for your dad to on the railroad, what did you do?

JD: Well I just worked there I think after school there I worked for him a little bit, an extra man they called me. We built a water tank over there one time, built a shed over the water over there at No. 2 sawmill. Had No. 1 and No. 2 and we had an old T-model Ford and they came in here with sand and rocks in these cars in them days and we had to empty them with a number 2 shovel and put that sand, throw it into that old T-model Ford we had there. And, I was helping over here with this tank, I never will forget, he was building in those days and he had about fifteen or twenty men and they all were real workers. We didn't have much money in them days. They had to write a white horse there on what you wanted and stuff, they didn't have money. Then they had these checks to pay them off on Saturday's. You got some of them haven't you? I got a lot more if you want them.

JG: Okay.

JD: That is what they were giving in them days. I think I worked for Daddy and then the following two years after that I didn't work for Daddy anymore in the summer months. I went to the sawmill before the NRA came, the National Recovery Act. I was working over there feeding the hog at the No. 2 Mill with Sydney Dubose. He was running the place and Frosty all day. We were all in the cut up shop there right by this hog that I was feeding the old hog.

JG: Now, I know what feeding the hog is but for our listeners tell what you mean by feeding the hog.

JD: That was the hog that a lot of this no good lumber had lots of bark you throw it into this chipper and it would chip it up into bark, fine bark. That is what I was doing and I was working for them ten hours a day for a dollar and a quarter a day. Then when the NRA came on they let me go and put a man in there making thirty-five cents an hour in those days.

JG: He was making \$3.50 and you were making \$1.25 huh?

JD: A \$1.25 a day. That was rough times in them days, but I forgot a lot of this stuff. When you get old you forget a lot.

JG: Talk a little bit about your family, the Jackson side of your family. Was that your mother's side, Jackson, or was that Dred's mother's side?

JD: The Jackson side, well my grandmother she had...

JG: Now who was that, was it Dred's?

JD: This was my mother's side.

JG: This is your mother's side of the family, her mother.

JD: She had eleven children and my grandfather, well I never did see him because he passed away in 1913 and I was born in 1915 and he was a Confederate in Civil War which is buried in Corrigan there. He was in the service and they had all these children and...

JG: Where were they from?

JD: They were originally from Corrigan, Texas. Originally my grandfather, he was from Alabama and my grandmother she was originally from around Texas here somewhere. All I can remember about them they were living in different states. But, they would all get together with my mother once in awhile and I have got a picture of all of them getting together and stay about a week or two there. My daddy and my Uncle Albert and his family, which my mother and Aunt Minnie we called her, she was a Jackson. Albert Jackson was on my mother's side, well that was his wife. My daddy and Aunt Minnie they were brothers and sister. Then all the cousins and then my mother, that was my dad and Aunt Minnie she was a Jackson, I mean a Devereaux. My mother's side, Albert Jackson and my mother they were Jacksons, and daddy and Aunt Minnie were Devereaux's. That made me related to them double first cousins and they lived next to each other here in Diboll up here on First Street or Hines Street now. They had in them days, I never will forget, it wasn't any restaurants or anything, they would all get together

and fry these chickens and peel them all themselves. It looked like around fifteen or twenty families there sometime.

JG: Yes, you have told me before about how the Jackson's had the big get-togethers and you would travel around and go different places. Did you go down to Corrigan and do some of that?

JD: No, I wasn't even here then it was way before.

JG: Okay, but you had told me once before I thought about going to see some of your kin folk at different places.

JD: Yes.

JG: Well what about train travel back in those days?

JD: Train travel, we had Southern Pacific. We would travel down to Houston with Southern Pacific and the Houston bus in them days I guess playing baseball then we would catch that train back up here I think it was about \$3.75 down and \$3.75 back.

JG: So, did y'all go down and see the Buffalo's play?

JD: Yes, see the Houston Buffalo's. In those days I think they were named the Colts in them days. That is when Babe Ruth was playing with the Yankees or Boston or somewhere down there. We would go down there and see them big leaguers in them days. They would fill up those grand stands just full of them people coming in. The people would be thousands of them just lining up in the outfield, people watching them ballgames in them days. That was something in them days.

JG: What about train travel? There is not too many people around today that rode on the trains like you did. Is there anything you care to share about that?

JD: It was lots of Strauss's and Jackson's and Devereaux's, that is the only way we had to travel in them days was on the train. And even you take the TSE [Texas South Eastern] in those days they rode the passenger train to Lufkin taking people to Lufkin and back in those days and that was the only way we really could go anywhere because nobody didn't have any cars in those days except some of them, well Daddy had a T-model Ford one time. I think that was about 1928 or something like that.

JG: So, how often did y'all travel to Lufkin saying when you were growing up?

JD: When we were coming up well we traveled up there to Lufkin nearly every Saturday night with daddy going up to Brookshire Brothers in them days, which, they didn't have no big stores in them days to buy groceries and bring them back in this T-model Ford we had. That was nearly every Saturday.

JG: Every Saturday go to Lufkin.

JD: Yes.

JG: Did he work Saturdays?

JD: I remember in those days the Thompson's run their, course that was right in the Antlers when the Hotel Antlers was here. That was the days he run a passenger car to Houston every day. He picked them up here daily for six or seven dollars a trip there and back.

JG: How were the highways then, the roads, compared to today?

JD: They were kind of gravel and sandy all the way. It was even cross that river there going down to New Willard.

JG: Talking about the Neches river bridge?

JD: Yes, all that was sand and rocks in them days.

JG: Would it get really bad when it got a lot of rain?

JD: It was rough, yes. I never will forget one time Daddy had some uncle's over in Weldon, Texas and we all got together there and my sister...

JG: I guess that is what I'm thinking of when y'all went to Weldon. What I was trying to get you to remember awhile ago was Weldon. I remember you used to go to Trinity County and stuff.

JD: You did?

JG: Well you've told me about that before.

JD: Oh yes, well...

JG: So go ahead and tell who was some of your family?

JD: We used to go to Weldon over there. That was Daddy's uncle over there, the Tarver's.

JG: Say that name again.

JD: Tarver.

JG: Tarver, T-a-r-v-e-r.

JD: Tarver...he would go over there and see them and we would go over there in that old T-model Ford and this time we went over there it was water and we got out there it was my mother and my sister and Helen Kelley (was my sister's friend) and myself and naturally Pauline was my younger sister and we went over there and before we got there we tried to go across the slough there and we couldn't make it, couldn't make it and a guy there with two mules hooked on there and charging them a dollar and a half to pull them out. All of them, we had to pay about three dollars to get to Weldon them days the road was so rough.

JG: Well that is pretty neat. So, what about where would somebody in Diboll at that time how would you buy a car? How would you buy a model-T? Where would you buy it?

JD: Lufkin, we would buy it at Lufkin. I can't think of that Ford name in them days. C. L. Dupee was one of them up there. C. L. Dupee and then...

JG: He was connected with the Manning, with Mr. Kelly. I think George Kelly of the Manning sawmill, that Dupee name.

JD: It was named after him wasn't it?

JG: What about the Estes garage here did y'all do business with him?

JD: Oh Lee Estes?

JG: Yes.

JD: Well I never will forget old Lee Estes he had them pumps in them days, you know, pump them up, the gasoline.

JG: Yes, you actually pumped the gas.

JD: Yes, and gasoline was about ten cents a gallon then. I never forget Joe Ballenger, he worked at the planer over there as a tie man, tie lumber and all...

JG: Secure it.

JD: ...he was good. He was kind of a middle age man and Uncle Tom they went to Lufkin every Saturday afternoon to the show.

JG: Now who is Uncle Tom?

JD: Uncle Tom was Aden Johnson and Rat Johnson they called him in them days, his brother that was their uncle.

JG: The Johnson's? Tom Johnson.

JD: Yes, that was their uncle and they all stayed together with their daddy. I think his name was Andrew Jackson...Johnson, and they all lived together there.

JG: They went to Lufkin.

JD: Uncle Tom lived right on down below them and every Saturday afternoon well his mother would give him two cigars and let him have that Ford to go to Lufkin to the picture show. And, Uncle Tom always went with him and Uncle Tom bought the gas. I think a couple of gallons about twenty or thirty cents for the T-model to go there and back. One time, I never will forget it, Joe and them got in and I was standing there when he came up there and Uncle Tom he was up there waiting on Joe to come up there to go with him to see the show in Lufkin and Uncle Tom was standing there waiting for Joe and here he come in that T-model and he told Bennie Rector he wanted three gallons of gas and Uncle Tom said "Joe I don't have any money today." He said, "well put three gallons in there Bennie" and Joe paid him and Uncle Tom said...Joe told him, "well I'll see you next Saturday Uncle Tom" and drove off and left him. He didn't have any money and so he didn't take Tom with him. He said, "I'll see you next week Tom." A funny thing happened.

JG: Now, when y'all went to Lufkin did you ever go to the movies, the picture show up there?

JD: Yes.

JG: What theater would you go to?

JD: Daddy bought me a 1936 Chevrolet. I might have told you about this a long time ago too. A 1936 and bought it from C. L. Dupee for \$600, a brand new demonstrator. It had pretty tires on the side of it and every Saturday...

JG: What color was it?

D: It was a silver type, silver part of it and kind of trimmed up in red around the fender. It was a super-duper. And every Saturday I would go and take Aden Johnson and that old boy that was here, Bruce Broker, his name was Booker and Kenneth Nelson sometimes and we would leave here on Saturday evening and go to the show and then they would have a midnight matinee show and we would stay until twelve o'clock to the show there. And, after the show we had to pass by the Angelina Hotel. It would be lots of Diboll boys went to Lufkin to see the midnight madness you see, and I've brought as many as thirteen and fourteen back on that...

JG: In that '36 Chevrolet huh?

JD: ...on that car of mine. They would be on the hood, on the tires, on the back and just filled in the back end there. That was every Saturday night. And, I never will forget, I

went to...when I went up there in them days I was working at the TSE I believe in about '41 when I still had that souped up car, no it was in '39. I went to Groveton and L.B. Warner and myself had some girls we would go see in Groveton every once in awhile and we would go over there and have a few drinks, and this time I had quite a few drinks, in my new car I was driving. Old L. B. was a painter in them days, paint houses. And I had too much dancing and things over there and leaving there I was a little bit out of the way. I couldn't drive that car and I asked L. B. can you drive this car? Yes, yes I can drive it, but he never did drive no car so, coming on down to Corrigan onto 35, in them days 59 was...

JG: State Highway 35.

JD: ...was 35 and come right there coming in from Groveton coming in at Corrigan I don't know how he was going to get on 35 the speed he was going and the lights was all bright and coming down that hill with them lights kind of blinded him and I said "stop this thing there is some cars in that railroad." There was a 216 pulling Southern Pacific out of there.

JG: Train number 216, yes.

JD: Yes, 216. It was 215 went down and 216 pulling back, that is what they had in them days.

JG: Yes, train numbers.

JD: I said, "stop this thing you are going to hit them cars." I don't know how he was going to get on 35 as fast as he was running and he ran into that car in the middle ways there. Just smashed my car there and I jumped in the back seat and I had gashes on my head and broke his collar bone. Didn't kill us but they were just fixing to pull out of there. They didn't have any conductors there to flag anything. That car was right across and went into there and they carried us over there to the doctor's office and Dr. Franks was a doctor there. His office was right there by the railroad.

JG: There in Corrigan?

JD: Yes, he was sewing up my head there with this gash I had in my head. All at once he had that needle in my head and that thread and I happened to think I had a drink out there underneath that car out there. I had a little pint. I said, "wait a minute let me run out" he said, "I can't stop I got that needle in you." I said, "I'll be right back" and I was holding that needle. It wasn't as far as from here to that train there and I ran out there and I reached under there trying to find this pint of whiskey I had and this conductor patted me on the back there and he said, "is this what you are looking for?" I said, "yes, let me have it." He said, "this is evidence." I went back in there and that ruined my little '39 car, my Chevrolet. (laughing)

JG: What did your dad think about that?

JD: He said I was looking for that. (laughing) Somebody told him and he said “I told Jack he was going to get in trouble over there some of these days.”

JG: Now why did y’all go back to Corrigan? Why did you go to Corrigan to come to Diboll? Why not, I guess before 2497 was even put in huh?

JD: That is the way we all come. Groveton was right there at the Groveton railroad it goes right to Groveton. You ever been that way?

JG: Yes. So, that was just the normal way.

JD: Yes, that is the way we went.

JG: Did you ever go to Fastrill or anything like that when you worked on the railroad?

JD: Yes, I was up there. I wasn’t working with him then, I was too young but, I just up there in the school days when they were out of...I was about ten or eleven years old then when he was up there in Fastrill.

JG: So, you would go with him sometimes?

JD: Yes, I just went up there with him.

JG: Did you know anybody?

JD: In those days boy I tell you, I don’t know how those guys worked like they did. They had a box car there and they had lots of these colored boys working for Daddy too with all these crossties and they had a big board there. They were bringing them crossties out of a box car.

JG: Just carrying them on their shoulders huh?

JD: Just carrying them ties on their shoulders one at a time and they were heavy, running down there and throwing them off.

JG: What about some of the other ways that work was done back then that is different from today?

JD: What is that?

JG: I said describe some other ways that work, labor, was different then than it is today.

JD: Well one thing about it in these days and times they got all type of machinery to building and things, but in them days all they had was a number 2 shovel. They didn’t have all these...

JG: Muscle and sweat and blood.

JD: That is all. That is all they had in them days.

JG: What about working with the animals, the mules and oxen and stuff? Did you work around animals much?

JD: No, no, but that was way before my time too. That was when they were bringing those logs in with those mules and things out at Fastrill and Kennedy. You take long years ago when Dave Kenley, he had lots of cattle. He was in the Forest Service here for Southern Pine in them days. He had lot of cattle and out there at Kerrville they had a place there to line up a cattle pen.

JG: You talking about Rayville or Kerrville?

JD: Rayville, well they had it in Kerrville too. They had one there and one too in...

JG: Rayville.

JD: Yes, he had hundreds of cattle and loading them in cattle cars and I would have to go out there and I had a time too. I had to count all of them going into them cattle cars.

JG: Who were you working for doing that?

JD: TSE [Texas South Eastern].

JG: TSE Railroad.

JD: Yes.

JG: So you reported to...

JD: That was in '36.

JG: Who did you report to?

JD: In 1935 they were loading them in there and that was in '36, yes.

JG: Did you ever witness some of those governmental programs where they would purposely slaughter the cows?

JD: Yes, yes.

JG: Did you see any of that?

JD: Where Roosevelt had them slaughtered?

JG: Yes, you saw some of that?

JD: Yes sir, I saw some of that right down here in let's see, let me think just a minute and I'll tell you where that was. It was right down here in Polk County. They had a slaughterhouse there. I was in high school then in them days. Just a real young freshman or something and I never will forget it, they were bringing them cattle in there and run them down in this thing they shoot and knocking them in the head. And, they wanted all of us to do it and I wouldn't do it. I couldn't do it. I never will forget it, Leroy Porter he was really the one up there knocking them in the head with a sledge hammer.

JG: What did they do with the bodies just burn them?

JD: Just take them out and burn them.

JG: But, you couldn't get the meat out of it could you?

JD: No, they were poor.

JG: And again, that was the government program just to pay you to kill your cows to get them out of production.

JD: Yes, how did you know about that?

JG: Well just through history. But there is not many people around that witnessed that. Tell us a little bit more about it.

JD: Well as I say they had them government men there.

JG: So, government men would witness it.

JD: At first they were offering those two and three cows to different people that would take them but wouldn't nobody take them in those days. And, they were...I never seen anything in my life as poor as those animals were in those days from lack of feed. I guess there was just so many of them they had to get rid of them.

JG: And they would just kill them with a sledge hammer. They wouldn't shoot them or anything. I guess it was too expensive.

JD: In those days they had lots of disease because they run lots of those cattle through a dip that dipping places they had.

JG: The dipping vats. So, the government actually had people there to witness it that they were killing them.

JD: Yes, it was lots of people there when they killed them and watching. I didn't stay long because I didn't like to see it.

JG: I bet not. I bet not. I've talked to a few people who have seen that and nobody has good memories of that.

JD: Yes they had in those days they had this coming up nearly every year a government man there to see that these cattle were dipped through these vats and the ones that wasn't they would take them and get rid of them.

JG: Now when you were counting these cows that were being loaded on the trains there at Rayville and TSE who did you report too? Who was over TSE then?

JD: C. A. Jordan. C. A. he was the auditor there. W. T. Menefee was over the traffic department. It was Florey Wood she was Boots Jackson's secretary. Boots was a cousin of mine and he was a trafficker that worked under Menefee. And Mrs. Kerr, she was the secretary under W. T. Menefee and it was C. A. Jordan he was the auditor. Boy that man was smart. He would take three figures right there and put the answer down. I never did know how he added that much. Tree figures four and five deep but.

JG: He did it all in his head huh, just figure it up on paper?

JD: Oh they didn't have nothing in that day.

JG: Calculators and things?

JD: Them old typewriters and things.

JG: Yes.

JD: Yes, that was some days in those TSE days we used to have that old planer there all dolly runs in them days over there at the mills.

JG: Dolly runs?

JD: Yes, you remember them, or you've heard of them?

JG: Well, I've seen them in pictures and heard about them.

JD: T-model Fords pulling all that lumber on them dolly runs from one shed to the next shed there and that planer it was wide open, wide open, they had the shed open but it was cold in that son of a gun.

JG: Now, you remember R. V. Honea don't you?

JD: Yes, he took my place when I left.

JG: Okay, okay.

JD: Yes, he was over TSE down in my part, Honea.

JG: No I'm talking about R. V. the Southern Pacific agent, the depot agent, George Honea's daddy.

JD: Well Honea worked for TSE one time didn't he?

JG: George did but I'm talking about his father.

JD: George is the one that took my place when I left here.

JG: Yes, I've heard you talk about R. V. before, his father, the Southern Pacific agent.

JD: Is he still living?

JG: George is, yes sir.

JD: He is?

JG: Yes sir.

JD: Where does he live at?

JG: In Lufkin.

JD: How old is he? He is getting on up there in his eighties isn't he?

JG: Yes, I guess so. But, you don't remember his father, R. V?

JD: I've heard of him but I don't remember him.

JG: He was involved with baseball stuff.

JD: Was he in the Southern Pacific up there in Lufkin?

JG: Yes sir, for awhile, yes sir.

JD: Yes, that is where I met him.

JG: Well he might have been here after you left. When did you leave to go off? Well, you went in the service but after that.

JD: After I left TSE?

JG: When did you go out to Arizona?

JD: I went there in '55. I went from here in '41 and '42 to the Lufkin Industries, Lufkin Foundry in them days. Then from '42 to '46 I went to Groveton, in the service.

JG: You were in the Navy?

JD: In '46 I went into the service in the Navy then I stayed in Groveton for nine years in the Chevrolet business then in '55 went to Arizona.

JG: How was the car business in those years?

JD: It was rough because it wasn't any cars. They were black marketed. Those people over there in them days if a car came in they would probably run around \$2,000 or even cheaper. Even from \$1800 to \$2000 and these people are waiting for a car for months before they get them. They would take them and black market them there for 4 and \$5,000 over there. I was in the parts department in Groveton from '46 to '55, nine years. But, it was rough in those days getting a car or truck or anything.

JG: Why was that?

JD: They were making enough of them.

JG: Too much demand and not enough supply.

JD: Too much demand for them.

JG: That is after the war so kind of a boom time, they couldn't build them fast enough.

JD: It was a long time there from about from 1946, it was around 1950 before a few of them cars were coming up.

JG: Now was that just here or was that everywhere?

JD: That was everywhere.

JG: Everywhere.

JD: That was everywhere. People would get mad boy because the dealer, the head of the Chevrolet over there he kind of had some person getting them before the other and they thought they were in there and they were having battles over it.

JG: Now you were in parts department the whole time?

JD: Yes, I was there for nine years.

JG: Tell about that a little bit. What was some of the most common parts you needed?

JD: I tell you what we had all kinds...I was parts manager and service manager and we had lots of trouble even getting parts in those days for cars that we would have cars sitting on the lots for months and months waiting on just one gear or one bearing before we could get it. Then lots of times we would go back and buy used parts to put in a brand new car.

JG: Really?

JD: Yes, that is how bad...

JG: So, a brand new car would need a new bearing?

JD: Yes, they didn't have them. We had to go and get used ones if you could get them then. But, that lasted about four or five six years before they started making them but, it was rough, it was rough. Everything was rough. It wasn't very much traveling either because they couldn't get their cars.

JG: Did y'all do a lot of service on older vehicles?

JD: Oh yes, we did lots of work on them.

JG: How often did you change the oil back then, the engine oil, motor oil?

JD: We changed that oil in those days about every month and a half.

JG: It wasn't as good as oil back then was it?

JD: No it wasn't. It was a little bit blacker. (laughter)

JG: Even in my lifetime I've see how much better the oil lubricants have gotten just in my life time it's got a lot better. So, ya'll change about every month and a half huh?

JD: Yes, where was you located in them days?

JG: Oh, I wasn't in those days.

JD: You originally from Lufkin?

JG: Not originally but I graduated from high school there. My grandfather was a body man for a Pontiac place in Houston probably about that same time. He was in the service in World War II and when he got out of the service he started working down there at Lester Goodson Pontiac. You ever heard of that?

JD: Yes, they are still in business down there.

JG: Are they?

JD: Yes. Wasn't Lester also in also Chevrolet and Cadillac wasn't he?

JG: He may have I just know Pontiac mostly is what my grandfather did.

JD: I know...I believe he worked for Roy Andrews, lived next to me there in Diboll here, he worked for Lester in Cadillacs and he was parts manager there for years and years. You might have known him.

JG: Yes, probably so. My grandfather was there from right after World War II all the way through the seventies so, forties, fifties, sixties and seventies.

JD: He knew Roy Andrews. He passed away not long ago.

JG: He has talked a lot about how the lubricants have gotten better just a lot better.

JD: Oh yes, it was rough. In them days too it was hard, you know, they didn't have these frames these days, oil frames, they were just right at your engine and it wasn't any good it was so black and everything. That is the reason you had to change that oil pretty regular. It wasn't like they are these days.

JG: No they say five or six thousand miles. Of course it might take you a while to do five or six thousand miles back then.

JD: You went to school in Lufkin?

JG: Yes sir.

JD: Who did you graduate with in them days?

JG: Well I graduated...

JD: Who is the football players?

JG: Oh I don't know I didn't play football. I graduated in '85.

JD: '85.

JG: Now, you graduated from Lufkin too didn't you, or Diboll? Where did you graduate?

JD: Diboll High School.

JG: Diboll okay. It was the Nelson's that went to Lufkin wasn't it?

JD: Yes, Edwin and Kenneth went to Lufkin High School, yes.

JG: So, y'all were friends but they ended up going to Lufkin and you stayed in Diboll right? What year did you graduate?

JD: In 1934.

JG: In '34, 1934. What was school like back then?

JD: It was a little bit rough. I tell you what, in '35 I graduated.

JG: Okay.

JD: I went to school in them days and they went to school in them days and they wouldn't take anybody unless they were seven years old but now they take them five and six years old and seven years old. When I started school here at seven years old I had pneumonia and they pulled me out of there, out of that school, and I laid there with that pneumonia for about six months.

JG: Wow!

JD: They had to get some type of medicine from Louisiana and give me that stuff and in those days they didn't have all these doctors and things to cure you. They had a mustard, they put hot mustard on your back there. In those days all they had was these box heaters, these old pine burners, box heaters, and when I had that pneumonia they put that pad there with this mustard they called it for the pneumonia and you got to get it hot and they slap it on your back there. And, they got this one, I never will forget Daddy, boy he was mad and they had a nurse come there to see me every morning and every day they stayed there until noon and she was putting these pads on me and one time she got too much of this pine lumber in this pot belly stove and slapped it on me and I mean it burned me. I still got scars on my back from it.

JG: Oh my gosh!

JD: And, they finally pulled me through that then I went back to school and I was supposed to go to the second grade. Well the second grade in them days they didn't have enough seats so they put me back to the first grade again. So, that put me in the '35 I graduated. In those days these school teachers were a little bit rough. They had a wooden paddle and I got them regular. (laughter)

JG: Now, what did you do to get paddled?

JD: Oh, throwing spit balls or something like that. They were rough in them days and I never will forget this, I don't know if you know or you might have read about it but, they

had these outdoor toilets and these things and this grammar school like it is right now, this small one behind Brookshire Brothers that is where the grammar school was, the lower grade. They had these toilets and one of them was right down on 35 in them days and the boys was way down further and I never will forget, Woodrow Kelly he was in the first grade and had the ladies and the men's down there, so you had to raise your hand if you had to go to the restrooms there, and she said "what do you want Woodrow" and he said "I got to go to the restroom." She said "okay" and she watched him go down there, instead of that he went to the girls.

JG: Because it was closer?

JD: Yes, he went to the girls and he came back up there and she said "what do you mean going to the girls there." He said "Mrs. Quarles it was closer." (laughter) I never will forget that. That was old Waymond Kelly. He is passed away.

JG: Now what did y'all call it? Did you call it the outhouse, the restroom, what did you call it?

JD: We just called them toilets.

JG: Toilets, okay, toilets.

JD: Them days they didn't have anybody, you might remember her there was a Mrs. Quarles she taught in the first grade. Mrs. Victor was the second grade. She was the wife of Bob Victor who was the depot agent in them days here in Diboll. And, Jewel Kelley in them days she was Jewel Estes, married Lee Estes.

JG: Okay.

JD: Sadie Woods she was fourth grade teacher.

JG: Sadie Estes Woods, yes.

JD: Yes, Sadie Estes Woods you might have heard about her a lot. Then there was Mrs. Weise was in the fifth grade and sixth and seventh grade. In them days they had more books in them days in different ones. Monzingo was in the sixth and seventh grade and McPherson he was a little low, heavy set guy, he was in the seventh grade. Well one time, Littleton Weeks, he was a little runt there, he did something in the fifth grade and Mrs. Weise usually carried us out in the hall if she was going to whip us with this paddle and Littleton threw a spit ball at somebody and she said "Littleton what did you do that for, come on here." She carried him out there and really tore him up, brought him back in there and he was sitting next to me there and she said, "Littleton what was that in your pocket?" He said "it was hickory nuts but they're busted now." (laughter) But, that is what they had in them days.

JG: Now, you said Littleton Weeks, do you know Franklin Weeks?

JD: Oh, Franklin was our high school score keeper. Oh, I know Franklin real well, heck yes! Oh Franklin Weeks, we talk about them old times. Franklin was a score keeper and he was hard about giving you hits. You got to have a...when you hit that ball it's got to be clear or he would give you an error. We all wanted them averages. I be doggone. I didn't know you knew him.

JG: So that was in high school you are talking about.

JD: Yes, high school baseball. He can tell you more about that baseball too when I was playing, yes he knew all about it. How is he doing I wonder?

JG: I haven't talked to him in awhile.

JD: He was in bad shape last time...he was a few years younger than I am. He is 96 or so. Franklin was in bad shape, he was head of all these cemeteries and things around here for a long time.

JG: Talk a little bit about you graduated in '35 and you probably started going to school in the early twenties so, I'm interested in that depression era, '30, '31 or '32, the Great Depression. Could you notice a difference?

JD: Oh man, let me tell you, what I say you are working for them for seventeen cents an hour and then that NRA came on giving people thirty-five cents an hour. Well in fact I was at the TSE when that NRA was still going on. What do they call them boys that went in that log cabin building?

JG: Talking about the Civilian Conservation Corp, the CCC or the WPA?

JD: WPA, yes.

JG: Works Progress Administration.

JD: Yes, working in them days it was rough, I tell you. In those days it was lots...

JG: What about in school could you tell it in your school books and things?

JD: Well in school in those days I knew lots of old boys, Robert L. Powell and them old boy's way out on the Read's and the Dykes, and they lived way out nearly to Beulah in those days. They didn't have any buses; they had to walk to school from there. Robert L. Powell he lived out there on 1818 and he would bring his horse in and tie him to the fence when he was in the fifth grade there. It was rough in those days.

JG: Now what did y'all call 1818 before it became a farm market road? What did y'all call that road?

JD: In those days all I ever knew was a Farm to Market road I don't know.

JG: Okay.

JD: It was a logging road mostly because I remember long years ago John Massingill and...he had six and eight mules pulling logs in here and he couldn't pull but three logs at a time they were so big. Now, you know they were big son of a guns and that went on for years and years that they were bringing them in during the depression.

JG: Were those pines or hardwoods?

JD: Pines. There was nothing in them days going out that a way except wagons and teams working for the Southern Pine Lumber Company.

JG: Bringing logs in on wagons, huh?

JD: Logging with them...they really didn't have any trucks in those days that could bring those big logs in here.

JG: Right, now the trucks started coming in the thirties do you remember when they started using the cab less trucks with the trailers? Do you remember that?

JD: Well I remember during the Depression this pressure when this oil field in east Texas opened up during the Depression years and they were buying Chevrolets without a top on.

JG: Without a what?

JD: Without a top.

JG: Without a cab.

JD: Yes just a cab type.

JG: Yes just a cab, just a windshield.

JD: Hauling lumber from here to Longview, Kilgore and all East Texas there. I never will forget I went with Lamb Jarroy, he was a truck driver in them days, he wanted me to go with him one time and this pine lumber it's pretty slick and they didn't put much of a rope around it and didn't want to scar that lumber up too much and going up a hill over there and dag-come-it that stuff started sliding off that truck. And, we were there eight hours picking up that lumber and loading it back on that old truck there. It was just open wide.

JG: What happened if you had to hit the brakes real hard? That lumber would come right through your head wouldn't it?

JD: Oh boy, you better watch out I'll tell you.

JG: So, that was your only trip and you almost lost your load.

JD: We weren't the only ones. They had lots of trouble with that lumber in them days because they didn't want to booger that lumber up chaining it down and everything. It was going to them oil fields up there in Longview.

JG: They chain them down now I know with them straps.

JD: You take E. C. Durham, he is the one that give me the job at the TSE there. He made his money there and I think bought a bunch of that East Texas land back there in them days.

JG: At Shawnee Prairie, E. C. Durham.

JD: Yes, he was over the TSE [Texas South Eastern] but he never was in there. He was an oil man. He bought all this East Texas back in there around Kilgore and back in there has a lot of land back in there. He paid a dollar and a half an acre for it back in them days.

JG: I think he had family up there years ago.

JD: Yes, and he lived right down here in Diboll for years too. He had three kids, had Laura, and Ed and Jake Durham. He had three kids and two of them was alcoholics and every time the old man would leave they would break in his whiskey.

JG: Did you ever go to his place in Shawnee Prairie, E. C. Durham's ranch out there?

JD: Yes, yes.

JG: Okay you did, okay.

JG: What was it like?

JD: Shawnee Prairie that is where he lived there too for awhile.

JG: Yes, that is what I'm saying. What was that like? We've read that he had a nice little ranch out there.

JD: Yes, he had a nice place out there.

JG: Mr. Temple said he had a nice place out there.

JD: Yes, two or three times he moved from here down here about where right below the Southern Pine Lumber Company there is some houses used to be over on this side, he

moved from there to Shawnee Prairie and then Ed Farley moved in his house there. That was back in about '34 and '35 somewhere in there. But, that was some road like I said out here on that farm to market road in them days.

JG: Now, you went to school with his kids didn't you, with E. C.'s children?

JD: Yes, with old Doug Warner, he lived out there. He had to walk to school. Them guys walked to school that far and back, way nearly to Beulah. That is a long ways.

JG: Did Jake or Ed Jr. play ball?

JD: They would bring their lunch in syrup buckets from way out there every day.

JG: Did they have to walk back or would they get a ride with somebody?

JD: No, there wasn't nothing to ride in them days. They had to walk.

JG: Walk back huh?

JD: The biggest part of it was all horses and mules and things in them days. Very few T-model cars you ever seen in them days. I got in business one time, I bought a T-model Ford Daddy put me when I finished high school there for a year or two, after I got out of Stephen F. Austin he put me in business in the Believe It or Not Café up here and used to sell that 3-2 beer. Beer, you didn't have no laws against when you could sell it. I would sell it, sell that stuff to twenty four hours a day. I'd stay there and the people would come in there one and two o'clock in the night wanting a beer and it was rough, it was pretty rough in them days. All we had was these old ice boxes and you had to put that beer in there. Now, this was when Kenneth Nelson, Fred Nelson he had it and he turned it over to daddy and put me up there and Shelley Bateman he was helping me.

JG: That was the Believe it Or Not Café that was near where the Post office is huh?

JD: Yes. That is where it was. I had it there for awhile and I had that...

JG: Didn't Mr. Bush work there too?

JD: ...we had that 3-2 beer and we would sell that stuff one and two o'clock in the night and it finally got me down and I had to get out of that business and daddy turned it over to somebody else.

JG: Now why did you get out of it, it was just rough?

JD: Oh man working there and them people waking you up all night at two and three o'clock.

JG: All hours of the night?

JD: Yes, blue goose is what we called it. Blue goose law didn't have no certain time there. I never will forget I tell you. Did I ever tell you about making home brew?

JG: No.

JD: Oh, what you call it used to be head of this History Center or used to be head of this History Center before you got here. What was his name?

JG: Mark.

JD: Yes, he had me tell about that one. Well, I told you about Coot Agee, and Morris Agee and J.B. Jackson and myself that was during the depression days and this old Ryan's Lake out here, you've heard about that place, well we used to go to the quarters over here and buy that home brew. It was good beer.

JG: Now, you say the quarters you are talking about the black part of town?

JD: Yes.

JG: Okay, the segregated.

JD: The colored people yes. It was good beer, so Bill Agee, he worked in the Southern Pine grocery store department and E. P. Rutland, he was the head of it and Kirk Drew was the manager over the grocery there and Mrs. Farrington she was on the other side there in the dress department. One time Bill said, "I tell you what," I guess I must have been about eighteen, nineteen years old something like that he said, "let's go down fishing on the Ryan's Lake awhile." He said, "we'll go over on Clear Lake where there is some good clear water and let's make some home brew." I said, "boy that sounds good we'll go make us some." So, I would go out there and stay two weeks making this home brew, two weeks and waiting for all of it to get ready. Sometimes it would take longer than that with it raising and that yeast keep going up and down it was ready. And we got one time we made about twenty five or thirty bottles of that stuff and on Saturday night Bill had an A-model Ford with a rumble seat in the back and two in the front and two in the rumble seat so, we would get in that and go kind of honky-tonking on a Saturday night with this home-brew. And then we made a batch one time and didn't have any place to keep it and they had an old feed store right by the planer right on down where that old store used to be. It was a bunch of houses in them day's right there on that street and the feed store was right by the planer next to it. You might have seen pictures of it where that White Handle Factory used to be.

JG: Yes, Temple White?

JD: Yes.

JG: Yes, there is a photograph there. There is the commissary and the depot and there is the library building, that two story building. That is Temple White I believe.

JD: This is the box factory?

JG: No, that is...yes, that is Temple White right there. This is the planer mill.

JD: Where is the planer mill?

JG: Right there.

JD: Where is the houses used to be...what is this here?

JG: That is Temple White.

JD: Yes, well that is where this building was, right there. It was a big old feed house right there.

JG: Okay, all right.

JD: That TSE railroad came right down by it.

JG: Yes, there is the tracks right here.

JD: Yes that is it, right here. Well right here we decided to put that beer in that feed store and it was in July and it was hot. Boy it was hot and we got back one Saturday night and carried it up there and put it in that feed store. Bill Agee he was head of the feed store and it had feed in it and different storage for the Southern Pine grocery store down there, old papers and everything down there too but, it had hay and all kind of sack feed. And, we had a place there we put this beer in there in July. So, the lady that lived there, Mrs. Jordan, lived right on the back street there, the first house there, heard something and went down to the grocery store and told...I was even in there we were all hanging out down there, hanging out during the day time watching people coming in there buying groceries and everything because old Bill he was a lot older than we was but he was always laughing at us younger kids, she said "Mr. Drew somebody's up there shooting a twenty two pistol in that feed store." He said "what?" He said...he called Bill he said "Bill come here, go up yonder and see what is happening in that feed store she said somebody is in there shooting a twenty two." He motioned at me and said "come on let's go." We went up there and I never smelled and never seen so many bottles of beer broken. That stuff got hot and just busted all over that place and we had one heck of a time cleaning it up. (laughter) That is the last time we started making that beer. Lord lord!

JG: Oh boy, well all right Mr. Devereaux we've went about an hour and a half.

JD: I don't know I forgot lots of this stuff.

JG: Well we can go back and get this transcribed.

JD: You don't want to hear that, don't let nobody hear all that.

JG: We'll figure out what we didn't cover. Maybe we can do another one if we need to, but I sure appreciate you sharing all that.

JD: I appreciate you.

JG: I'll go ahead if it's all right with you and stop it for now unless there is anything you wanted to add at the moment.

JD: I think that is about all I can remember.

JG: I know you can remember more but that is a good start anyways.

JD: A lot of that stuff I forgot. When you get ninety something years you have to sit down and think about a lots of times about them old times. It kind of brought back memories of it.

JG: Well thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW