

**CARY MODISETT**

**WYNN HAVARD**

**Interview 252a**

**May 30, 2012, at The History Center, Diboll, Texas**

**Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer**

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**ABSTRACT:** In this interview with Jonathan Gerland, Angelina County natives Cary Modisett and Wynn Havard reminisce about growing up along the Neches River in the middle of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Both men speak about their homes and families, living along the river before indoor plumbing, electricity, and telephones, and the changes that took place in their community as technology advanced. They talk about fishing the river with hoop nets, moonshiners, hunting with dogs, rounding up and killing hogs, their hunting dogs, working for lumber companies, and how they amused themselves as children. Mr. Modisett and Mr. Havard mention the difficulties many of the older generations had as the lumber companies closed their land to community access and hunting and the changing game laws.

**Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG):** Today's date is May 30, 2012. My name is Jonathan Gerland and I'm with Mr. Cary Modisett and Wynn Havard and we are going to do an oral history today. We are at The History Center in the conference room here and also with us is Richard Donovan who will be assisting us to record some of these memories. Maybe to get started we will start with you, Mr. Modisett and then go to Mr. Havard, maybe just tell us when and where you were born just to sort of get us going and then if you'll do that and then you do it Mr. Havard and then maybe we can start with some of your earliest memories growing up. Tell a little bit about your family and what your mother and father did and that kind of thing. We will start with you Mr. Modisett.

**CARY MODISETT (hereafter CM):** I was born on what they call up on the river in a little place called Lambert's Chapel and the old doctor that delivered me was killed in a car wreck not long afterwards. His name was Dr. Hancock. I can tell you quite a few things about up on the river.

**JG:** When were you born?

**CM:** December 14, 1937.

**JG:** 1937. What did your father do?

**CM:** My dad, like so many, went to the shipyards to work during the war, came back and work was scarce and he got a job with the Forest Service and also keeping up the old game reserve fence that Angelina County Lumber Company owned at that time.

**JG:** What were your parent's names?

**CM:** Charles and Bertie Modisett. She was a McGaughey, my mother.

**JG:** Okay, when you say the river we are talking about the Neches River?

**CM:** Yes sir, from I've always thought from Saron crossroad to Aaron Grimes's going up the river. That may be or may not be.

**JG:** Okay. Mr. Havard when and where were you born?

**Wynn Havard (hereafter WH):** I was born in Lufkin in 1947, August 11<sup>th</sup>. I lived in Saron community most of my life, went to school in Zavalla. My daddy was a welder. He worked construction, mother was a housewife and she stayed home and raised the kids while daddy was off working.

**JG:** What were your parent's names?

**WH:** Mother was Gladys Day and my daddy was Lester Havard but they called him Havard Havard. He had...they were Lester and Bester, they were twins. They worked together up until Bester got killed and they said there was only one job that they never worked together and he was known as Havard Havard.

**JG:** And there were and still are lots of Havard's in this part of the country.

**WH:** Oh there is a lot of Havard's.

**JG:** So, that helped distinguish him huh, Havard Havard. (laughter)

**WH:** Like I said most people didn't even know his first name.

**JG:** Mr. Modisett, tell a little bit about...did you live down around the shipyards in your early life? You said...or your father go down there and work?

**CM:** No he worked and came in on weekends.

**JG:** Did you have brothers and sisters?

**CM:** I have two brothers and two sisters.

**JG:** Where were you in there as far as?

**CM:** I was the baby.

**JG:** You were the baby okay.

**CM:** I didn't make the World War II, but my oldest sister went to nursing school and became an RN. My brother finally wound up at Texas A&M but he didn't get to go until the war was over, from '50 to '55 I guess. In '48, I'm sorry I believe he graduated in '50.

**JG:** Where did you go to school?

**CM:** I went to school in Zavalla from...anyway, the class of '55.

**JG:** Class of '55, okay. What is some of your earliest memories growing up as a child?

**CM:** We had a lot of hogs in the woods that ran wild, people did and the Havard family that lived across the road from us was little Charlie Havard. I looked up to him like a second daddy and later years preached his funeral, but he was...he was ten feet tall in my sight and that is what I remember first was things he could do with hogs and with a net. And I really believe if he hadn't been a tiny bit lazy there wouldn't be any fish in the river. (laughter) I am saying that. It's kind of funny, but it's some truth in it too.

**JG:** So, you went fishing with him a lot.

**CM:** Yes sir.

**JG:** Well tell about that. How did you fish back then? What was a fishing trip like?

**CM:** Charlie had three nets, two of them was illegal and one of them was legal. He said you couldn't catch a mess of fish in a legal net. He didn't believe you could so he had one to show the game warden and two to get his fish in.

**JG:** Now what made them legal and illegal?

**CM:** An inch and a half was what he wanted to tie for himself, three inches I believe was the legal limit.

**JG:** And that is the spacing?

**CM:** Yes, between the nets and those things are precious to me. He took a little old twenty-two with shorts and I told him one day about seeing an old deer on his pond dam and told him what it looked like and how many points it had. It was a high horn deer, I remembered it real well. He said "I'll get him." In about two weeks he called me down to his house. "I want to show you something." So, he carried me out there and showed me the horns off that deer (laughter) and there was no mistaking, you know, because I described it. I had a real good look at the deer so he was that kind of person. He would shoot shorts in that twenty-two and everybody would use high powered rifles and things. Little Charlie didn't believe in that. He was just 22 shorts.

**Richard Donovan (hereafter RD):** Do you think he shot that deer in the daytime or at night Cary?

**CM:** Either one, it didn't matter to him. Whatever was necessary? I didn't think of Charlie as being an outlaw because he didn't sell anything he just ate his own food.

**JG:** So, this would have been in the forties, early fifties?

**CM:** Yes sir, during that time. My dad worked the fire tower and he was worried about crossing the state so he stopped outlaw hunting.

**JG:** You said he worked fire tower what do you mean by that?

**CM:** He was Texas Forest Service tower man and whatever that position was, you know, you ran a tower.

**JG:** Did he travel around a good bit through East Texas?

**CM:** No, he was at Wolf Hill. You remember Dick that he was there.

**RD:** Yes, just look out spotting for fires.

**CM:** My daddy thought a lot of Richard. He was...he always liked him and you didn't know it but we would be coon hunting or something and he would tell them old stories. He was wanting to get you tickled. He loved to see you...I would watch Daddy. He loved to tell stuff. And, he knew some good ones didn't he?

**RD:** Yes, he did.

**JG:** Well, what were some of the stories? Now this would be I guess from the forties telling stories of the past before that time right? Would that be the time period?

**CM:** Well, it was also prohibition times was it not but still a lot of old evidence of things that had gone on during the thirties I suppose in prohibition days. A lot of old stills' in the woods you can find chopped up. I don't know if I ought to call these people making this whiskey or not. But, anyway Charlie had a man that was his cousin and he was afflicted, he was a hair lipped man and real close to me just like a brother. Maybe I can say things about him that I wouldn't say if I didn't know him so good, you know. But, he had to move a whiskey still which helped this man that had a still up on behind Renfro Pasture. Was that Pine Island or something back in there? He was going to move it down to the mouth of Shawnee Creek and one of the things he told, he wouldn't tell my daddy for years and years. Daddy rebuked him when he finally told him. He said he wasn't that ignorant, but he had done told me and several old boys all over the country. It would take him a long time to tell it because it was funny but he said they got the whiskey still loaded and had it in a boat, a cypress boat, and so this man said "it was a 16 foot cypress boat with an 18 horse Johnson on it" and he said when they got through loading the still said "that much of it sticking out of the water" it was loaded now. It was loaded to the gill.

**JG:** So, you are talking in dialect then for the recording then. Did you quite catch all that?

**CM:** He was so serious about it. I believe the man told it until he believed it. Honest to God I believe he believed that but anyway, he said they siphoned them off a gallon a piece, these two men in a boat and the man that owned the still was running the motor and Alvin of course was just a hired hand helping him. So, he said he got down to where the rivers converged at the island back...I know you've been through there.

**JG:** At the mouth of Shawnee Creek?

**CM:** No, they were on their way. There is a pine island or something that is where the still was but they got word that the sheriff department, Henry Billingsley, was going to chop it up the following Monday so they had to get it out on Sunday and this is when it took place, you know.

**JG:** Now would this have been where Fort Teran was, the little island there?

**CM:** They had to pass Fort Teran. They wouldn't have been going but about a half a mile below Fort Teran. That is where they were going to move the still too.

**RD:** But, they started north of there.

**JG:** That is probably that little island thing they were talking about.

**CM:** But, it's way up that river to where that still was. I've wondered lots of times I said man they had 25 miles wasn't it Wynn around the curves.

**WH:** At least, yes.

**CM:** But anyways said he got to where the rivers converge back together and the river was high, high he said and he was feeling his alcohol and he started playing out there in that river and he got Alvin scared. He said he got that old boat going round and round and he had the motor pulled all the way to the side, you know, and directly Alvin realized he was digging a hole in the river and he said "I looked up and it was five foot out of the water." (laughter) He said "I reached under and got that jug and it scared me so bad I laid down in the boat." Now I thought Alvin you had done drank so much you laid down in the boat but he swore that he was that afraid, you know. But anyway he said he just kept going round and round and kept digging that hole with momentum. Now I don't know if he was cutting threads in that river or what he was doing but, just going round and round digging a hole he said directly he looked up and "it was fifteen foot to the top of the water."

**JG:** Fifteen foot to what?

**CM:** Fifteen foot to the top of the water. He said “I thought yes, that river is about 25 foot.”

**JG:** So, he was making a whirlpool then. (laughter)

**CM:** Yes, he said “when that prop hits that water it’s going to be all over.” So, he said he was so scared he was laying down in the boat. He said “just about the time” I’m not going to call this man’s name, that he got to about where he thought he was going to hit the bottom he said he run that motor out the other way and started backing out and come out just like he went in.

**JG:** (laughing) In reverse.

**CM:** He reversed it and he said “when it got to the top of the water it jumped 25 foot.” (laughing) He said there was waves going out across that river bottom. It was a pretty good tale but when he told my daddy, Daddy said “Alvin you have insulted my integrity, I am not that stupid.” (laughing)

**JG:** What size I guess it would be an outboard motor?

**CM:** An outboard motor, he said it was an 18 horse. That was also questionable because I don’t believe I ever saw one that big until I was grown.

**RD:** Right.

**CM:** And so, I think he had...

**JG:** Was it a Johnson or an Evinrude?

**CM:** A Johnson, he said an 18 horse Johnson. Yes, he told it to a lot of people and we laughed about it a lot. I told Richard I said that is the only thing that I know and I can’t document it because I didn’t never see the hole.

**WH:** It would be hard to see that hole.

**RD:** Cary I grew up hearing a story and my mind I can’t remember who it was but, the lighting struck something that he considered valuable and he went out and crawled up on a fence post and said “you old grey headed so and so strike me and you struck a pine knot” and lighting struck a tree right there right beside of him and it liked to have scared him to death. Did you ever hear that story before?

**CM:** I don’t believe I did. I don’t believe I did. I wish I could tell you something.

**RD:** It was one of those river folks in there and I can’t remember who it was.

**CM:** I don't believe it would have been Alvin. He pretty...he feared God pretty much but...

**JG:** Well tell a little bit more again we were talking earlier about the younger generation not identifying with some of the old ways of life. Tell a little bit more about these fishing trips and just being outdoors more so than today's people are especially the young ones.

**CM:** The work situation is what I was referring to or what you were talking about awhile ago but, for example the Flournoy boys; Morgan Flournoy had 4 boys and all the women that lived around that area thought Morgan was working those boys to death and thought surely he was going to kill them, but all those boys turned out good. That is all they ever knew was hard work, you know, and somehow we have lost that vision and when you leave that you leave something that a kid needs to know. I'm not saying they need to work as hard as those Flournoy boys but them is good boys. There is something of quality that those days of work didn't hurt them and I don't think any of them resented it as far as I know. I think Don is some kind of a school administrator, college president or something. Do you know Dick?

**RD:** No I don't.

**CM:** Up in Ohio, and of course Tom, you know, all those boys were good, Don, Tom and Pete and all of them. One of them is a lawyer here in town. But then, you know, Minyard Cryer, he worked George and Calvin until I used to think it was unmerciful.

**JG:** Who is that?

**CM:** Over at Zavalla, Mr. Minyard Cryer.

**JG:** Minyard Cryer?

**CM:** Yes sir.

**CM:** Okay.

**CM:** He has got two boys that is mine and Richards age and that is all them boys knew was to work. George came along and he had two boys and he worked them pretty hard. Those boys turned out good. It's something though when you leave that it creates a deficit there between something that we need or it's something you don't learn. I don't know what it is. Can you explain that Richard?

**RD:** I can't except responsibility.

**WH:** Well, I was never...I grew up in the time when about the time I grew up the people quit raising cotton and I never had to pick cotton. I remember all the older boys that is what they did every year was pick cotton. They quit farming about that time except

just for their garden. I never really had to work hard in the fields like they are talking about.

**CM:** Well we did, daylight to dark, before daylight till after dark because it was a simple logic Bible phrase, idle minds a devil's workshop, you know. That is not exactly Bible but that is what old timers would say. (laughter) And, it pretty well held to that. Then the war came on and something, you know, after the war it was always different, the people never did work like they did, like they had before.

**JG:** Well tell again, for our audience that doesn't know about this hard work tell...you mentioned picking cotton and things like that but, tell what the hard work was.

**CM:** Well we just had a 50 acre field in a river bottom and if we didn't take it from the grass the grass would take it from us whether we were raising peanuts, corn, high gear or whatever. I don't think we raised much cotton after I was grown but, before I was grown my brothers and sisters never ceased to remind me that I did not have to pick any cotton either.

**JG:** Did you cultivate all 50 acres?

**CM:** Yes, no I'm sorry 40 of it.

**JG:** Forty.

**CM:** Forty was in the field, ten at the house and we had gardens and stuff up there at the house.

**JG:** So, what was working the field like? What was a season, a season of work in the fields?

**CM:** Daddy was at the shipyard and he came in one weekend and it was eating my brother and myself up. I wasn't really big enough to figure in much but he asked my brother he said, "If I went and got you a new tractor would you run it?" And, my brother said "I'll run it till the wheels fall off."

**RD:** Was that Jimmy Sam?

**CM:** Jimmy Sam – that is the way he answered Daddy and pretty near did. We worked that old tractor.

**JG:** Do you remember what kind of tractor it was?

**CM:** An International Model B.

**JG:** How many horsepower did it have?



**CM:** I imagine about 28 or 30, probably. I don't know. I'm just guessing. It couldn't have been over that.

**WH:** It wouldn't have been over.

**CM:** It wouldn't have been over that.

**JG:** Was it gasoline or diesel?

**CM:** Gas.

**JG:** Gas okay. So, how would you cultivate the soil? What type of implements did you use?

**CM:** We had a two blade tiller that we would break it up on but not every year. What would that be called, flat breaking, then you can get by a few years without having to do it again until the soil I guess would revise, you know.

**JG:** What did you plant and when did you plant?

**CM:** We had to watch the river because it got in our field. We usually had a late crop and several times we had to replant because the backwater would get in our field but seems like to me I never got out of the field until it was nearly about time for school to start again. Finally get laid by and get a week or two.

**JG:** Did school start later back then say late September?

**CM:** I think so.

**JG:** You know now it starts in late August. I know in the old, old days it didn't start until about September 30<sup>th</sup>.

**CM:** Yes, I don't believe I would have got a day if it had.

**JG:** I think until after the cotton picking season was over school didn't start. Was that the case during your time too, a late school start?

**WH:** Yes, I'm not quite as old as these and school started the week after Labor Day when I was growing up and we always turned out around May 16<sup>th</sup> somewhere along there.

**CM:** But, the River Road to me was made up of Havard people and there was some Harris's and there was Grimes's.

**RD:** Gilchrist.

**CM:** Gilchrist, Cameron's, some wonderful old people lived on that road. I go up through there now and I get depressed because a lot of them, I preached their funerals you know, and Weavers'. What we called Weaver Bend that is part of the River Road you see. Charles Havard that we call Peewee and Burlon, if you could get those two guys over here they could really clarify some of this because they know a lot of things about the River Road.

**RD:** They did a lot of logging too, didn't they Cary?

**CM:** They did a lot of logging.

**WH:** With crosscutting.

**JG:** Tell about again net fishing, just describe about how you would do that. Does anybody use nets anymore? Is it mostly trot lines?

**CM:** They use them. (laughter)

**JG:** Well describe that because I think most people don't know how you run nets.

**CM:** Well, little Charlie Havard was what they called a high water fisherman and he only fished, basically, in the spring and he had eighteen to twenty feet nets with, you know, like I said he didn't really believe you could catch a mess of fish in a legal net. So, he had two inch and a half mesh, but you could walk in the front of his, it was about five and a half feet and then they tapered of course down to about eighteen to twenty foot net is a large net, you know. I remember one time he had 19 flat head ops we called them that weighed better than 600 pounds and that is just an example.

**JG:** Opelousas cats' yes.

**CM:** Yes, I remember he brought them out and showed them to us.

**JG:** So, would he drag the nets behind the boats?

**CM:** Sometimes you would have to dip the net under the boat, I'm sorry the boat under the net. Can I get that right? You would have to simply dip the boat under the net and then bail the boat out. That is the only way you could get them in there when you had one that full. That is what they had to do that day.

**RD:** Jonathan what they would do is string that net out down river. They would have fixed one end of it and then stretch it out and the fish would swim into it. They would go off and leave it.

**CM:** See Charlie had a pattern. When the river would be down low we would go down and look. He knew that a fish coming up the river in the spring changed sides every time it got to the curve. It won't make the curve it goes straight across and then turns up the

other side. Then when it gets up to the next curve it's the same thing. It always crosses the river and does not follow a pattern like a trail. It won't do it. So, he'd find place that he knew they would be traveling. Where he could trap them would usually be between maybe a stump and some kind of obstruction, you know, that caused that fish to have to go with the current and go around it just a little bit. A lot of times he would have a net set that you wouldn't believe what he caught in that but, to get that net like that it was hard to set to get it exactly right.

**JG:** So he would fix both ends of it.

**CM:** Yes, he had to make that anchor of that net just exactly right so that the mouth...

**JG:** So, he would anchor to a stump on one side, what would he anchor on the other side of it the side of the riverbank or a tree?

**CM:** Well he set a net that would set itself. He said when it's right and you get it right it will swing right in position. That was always his theory. But now this helper, this Alvin that we was talking about that I thought so much of, loved him like a brother, he didn't like that business. He thought that Charlie was fanatic and the main reason he did is because he had an old motor that you had to wind the cord up on. It didn't have a reverse, it didn't have a neutral you just crank that thing and then turn it if you wanted it to back up. Not only was it dangerous because it had that old open fly wheel on top, but Alvin it was just more pulling than he wanted to do so he would cuss like a sailor now. "It ain't no sense, 'at beat anything I ever seen" (laughing) but, Charlie would make him "no Alvin take it back up the river we are going to move it" So, what he would do he would make Alvin run that net straight across the river near about it and he would turn it loose and if it was like he said it would set itself.

**JG:** The current would swing it around.

**RD:** The anchor or tail end of it was shaped like a funnel and they would anchor this tail end and they knew just how to anchor it and the current would swing it right into where he wanted it to go.

**CM:** And when he got it like he wanted it...it was right in that trail where those flat head...

**JG:** How was the drifting end, what is on it floats or weights or what?

**CM:** No, the weight of the net itself. I don't remember him having any weights on it. It just set perfectly and had that huge old five and a half foot first hoop or two you know, was a big net.

**RD:** Did he make his hoops out of white oak or what Cary?

**CM:** White oak is what I think he used back then.

**JG:** So it would just swing in with the current and sort of trap them against the bank?

**CM:** Well what you call a second bank a lot of times in a river you have two banks and on some of his net sets it did it would just come right up against the bank beautifully. And, then other places were places he had picked out when the river was low and he would have it in kind of an entrapment and it would really, really, really pay off.

**JG:** So, what would be a day of fishing? Starting off early in the morning?

**CM:** Oh yes, he would be out there early.

**JG:** All day or just get your catch and call it a day or what?

**CM:** No not with just three nets he usually used it didn't take him that long. One time, you know, the game warden caught him and wanted to see his nets and so he showed him the three inch net and let the game warden go on his way and then he picked up his other two and got his fish.

**JG:** And what kind of fish would he catch?

**CM:** Mostly flat heads. He said if you started catching white perch you were real close, crappie we call them now but back then they was all white perch. It might have been white perch. Were they Dick?

**RD:** There synonymous, that is what we called them white perch but now they got to be crappie after the lake came.

**JG:** There is even such a thing as a black crappie when you get into all that. So, you catch white perch in your nets and you are real close that means you're real close to where you want to be for the catfish.

**CM:** He hardly ever catch a buffalo in rough fish like that and if somebody was catching that he would just kind of smile, you know.

**JG:** What about sand bass did he ever catch any white bass or anything?

**CM:** I don't remember, but you mentioned awhile ago a spoon bill he caught some of those. And, I haven't seen one in years now.

**RD:** Paddle fish they call them; Jonathan, they are almost extinct now.

**JG:** What about carp? Were there many carp back then?

**RD:** Yes, I caught a lot of carp because I didn't know how to set a trap.

**WH:** I'm not sure there was any striped bass back in the river at that time.

**RD:** I didn't know of any.

**WH:** I had never heard of them when I was young.

**CM:** Usually when somebody caught a bunch of buffalo he would say you are on the wrong side of the river but, that was Charlie.

**JG:** What about black bass were there any black bass?

**CM:** I don't remember any of them but there were some small mouth bass in that river. We would catch some of those.

**JG:** Small mouth, huh! So, what would he do with the fish?

**CM:** He would sell them before they outlawed selling the op. You can't sell one anymore it's a game fish right? But, that wasn't that way in the forties or fifties.

**JG:** Did he clean them and sell them cleaned or was there buyers waiting for him each day?

**CM:** I don't know where he took those fish but...he had a buyer somewhere in Lufkin.

**JG:** Carlene's? (laughter) So he would have taken them to a buyer on that day.

**CM:** Yes, he sold his fish.

**JG:** Sold his fish.

**WH:** See Cary has told me that Charlie was real secretive and he wouldn't let anybody go with him except Alvin to set that net. He didn't want them to see how he did it.

**CM:** Or where it was at.

**JG:** Well, I was going to ask you too, was there much competition, were there others? I haven't told you this Mr. Donovan, but in some of the old Dallas Morning News newspapers, I've in the last few months, have found it's going back to like the 1890's even, there was wars down there in that river in the same area you are talking about, of competing net men, people stealing their nets and cutting their nets. It made the Dallas Newspapers over a hundred years ago.

**CM:** My, my!

**JG:** Was there any of that going on during your day?

**CM:** I can't remember him having any problem except with I asked Alvin, the hair lip boy that I was raised with, he had a toe sack of op on his shoulder and a big old op in his hand and I said, "how much will that old op there weight Alvin?" And, he said "fifteen pounds." I said "Alvin it will weigh thirty at least." "No, fifteen pounds." I said, "Where did you get them." "In the river." I said, "yes, I kind of thought you did." He was right there by it you know, and but he come to me and apologized. He said, "I'm sorry, I smarted off to you the other day but I told a man one time where my net was and it cost me \$35. He said, "When I went to get it the game warden was sitting on it." So, that is the way they looked at it. They were very secretive. I told Charlie all I want you to leave me, Charlie, in your will is your net set, don't leave me nothing you got but your net set. So, about two or three years before he died he said, "Cary I was sure going to leave you that net set." I didn't know he had ever heard me, but he said, "that net set is gone with the river. The river is changed." He said, "There is nothing there anymore." He said "I'll tell you where it was if you want to try it" but he said, "There is nothing there anymore."

**JG:** How much time did you spend on the river?

**CM:** Every minute my daddy didn't keep me in that field. I loved it with all my heart. I just, we were river rats in a way, weren't we Dick? I just...we used telephones if we could...

**JG:** For fishing?

**CM:** For fishing.

**JG:** Remember we are referring to a younger audience here so, they wouldn't know what you were talking about probably, or some of them.

**CM:** Well it got to be popular back in the fifties. I remember when the Korean war broke out and a bunch of boys were going to Korea and we all went down there, kind of give them a farewell party, and took an old telephone down there.

**JG:** Talking about a hand crank telephone.

**CM:** Yes, the river was real low and we took an old fellow that was synonymous with the river and I better not use his name, but he was like another daddy to me, I had a lot of them. I loved them old river rats and their ways of fishing.

**RD:** It wouldn't hurt to tell who he was Cary.

**CM:** I better not Dick.

**JG:** There is statute of limitations you know.

**CM:** But, I know all of his family. I love them like my own, you know. They...but anyway...

**JG:** So how would you work the telephone?

**CM:** The first thing we did to him was give him about a half pint of gin and got him ready to go do it (laughing) and primed him. We had to prime him before we could get the telephone hooked up. The old man had done so much and had ingested so much of that gin I guess that he forgot to put the wires on so when he threw them out the whole thing went out in the river. We had to dive for the ignorant wires and so we finally got the wires back and hooked them back up but we filled up two or three toe sacks of fish you know.

**JG:** So, you would put the wires in the water...

**CM:** Yes, and don't step on one of them. I promise you it hurts.

**JG:** ...then you just crank. How big a radius would it shock the fish up?

**CM:** There was about four or five of us swimming after the fish with dip nets, you know, and sometimes they would have to show them to us, we couldn't see them as well as they could up on the bank. We would just have to send him out on a log somewhere to a place where that he could operate and we could too.

**JG:** Operate the telephone.

**CM:** Because really he couldn't operate off the bank it wouldn't hardly work but if he could find him a log somewhere and go across each side or the further you could get your wires apart the more coverage you have. The wires, that is why I said, are about twenty feet long and naturally when he threw both of them in the river we lost our whole situation but, we got it back. We dived for the wires.

**JG:** So it shocked between the ends of the wires that area there would shock whatever fish were in there.

**WH:** It probably shocked thirty or forty feet.

**CM:** We walked out on a big old log, or he did, and we were there going to pick up a bunch, you know, and a bunch of high fin blues came out, prettiest ones, I hadn't seen any in years and they just shot up through that drift and couldn't get back down. We just reached and picked them up.

**JG:** Blue catfish you're talking about?

**CM:** Yes, some of them went out on the bank they must have been from the same school because they were about eight to ten pounds. I mean that was a sack full right there.

**RD:** It will work only on catfish.

**JG:** I'm sorry.

**RD:** It will work only on catfish.

**JG:** Only on catfish. Now why is that?

**CM:** I don't know. We ran...

**WH:** It won't work on scale fish.

**CM:** ...we ran an old sucker out on the bank one time and I never did know. He had two old whiskers, you know, that stuck out. I always wondered if it really was that or something else scared him.

**WH:** It has to be in running water.

**JG:** What is that?

**WH:** It has to be in running water. It won't work in a pond.

**JG:** It won't work in a pond.

**CM:** For some reason.

**WH:** I don't know why. And, if you ever touch a fish he is gone. They will lay up on top for several seconds but if you touch him...

**CM:** It rattles them or something and whenever you touch them they gone.

**JG:** So, you use a little hand net to grab them. So, it just temporarily shocked them, disabled them for a little bit.

**WH:** Yes, and it does not sterilize them because they use them to raise their brood fish up in the hatchery somewhat. There was a story came out one time that it sterilized the fish but that is not true.

**CM:** No.

**JG:** I think the Parks & Wildlife does some kind of electro shock now. That is how they do the surveys. They survey the lakes and stuff. Mr. Modisette is taking a little break. Mr. Havard do you care to add anything or some of your memories, did you spend much time on the river?

**WH:** We were about two miles from the river and we would go as often as we could. Of course when I was a kid there was no paved roads, everything was still sand.



**CM:** Is my nose long like Pinocchio? I wasn't lying was I?

**JG:** You need a Kleenex or something?

**CM:** No, no. I don't know why I started coughing.

**CM:** If my nose grew out like Pinocchio's I guess I was lying.

**JG:** Go ahead.

**WH:** In the summertime we always had cousins everywhere living close around. We would get up [and] as soon as we ate something we would go and start playing and doing whatever we was going to do. The old roads was so hot in the summer time you would have to cross your feet to cross them because the sand was so hot. We would go hog hunting. Of course the hogs was armadillos. We would go catch armadillos and we would chop the tails off and mark them just like the grownups did their hogs and we had hogs running all over the woods.

**JG:** But they were armadillos? You played like they were hogs.

**WH:** Yes, that was our hogs.

**CM:** Hoover hogs.

**JG:** Hoover hogs!

**WH:** You know kids now days don't know how to play and have fun. If they can't be doing something with their hands on a computer or an X-Box or something...we used to go and take pine saplings and take three of us to pull them over. One would get on top and we would let it go.

**JG:** Catapult you huh?

**WH:** Yes, that was how we had fun. An old stray dog come around you would put clothes pins on his ears and get you a can and put rocks in it and tie it on his tail and send him home. (laughter) And, then the neighbors would get mad and come back and say something to your parents.

**CM:** That Saron is a rough place. (laughter)

**RD:** Lambert's Chapel was more genteel wasn't it?

**CM:** Yes, we were docile, yes. But we did have a flying jenny at the family reunion every year. It was nothing like a flying jenny to take a big old log, a pole you know, and cut a stump and put that thing on top of it and mount it and either pin it or I don't know

how it was fastened to be honest with you, but I know one thing, you could sure get knocked in the head on that thing or get hurt on it. But, we had a time, yes I tell you. But kids were going to do something. We didn't have any toys or any play things at the family reunions and get together, so we rode that flying jenny. That was the talk of the town.

**JG:** Now, tell what that is.

**WH:** A flying jenny?

**JG:** Yes.

**CM:** It's a pole about 30 or 40 foot long that is just you have a stump in the middle and you fasten it where it will swivel where the flying genie would go around like a merry go round but, it's nothing but a pole and you get about ten kids on each end of that thing running with it, you know. If somebody don't get knocked in the head it's a miracle, I'll tell you.

**WH:** It's everybody and the neighbors would visit and something you don't see now days, a kid wouldn't know what it was is a bouncing board. All it was, was a plank, maybe ten feet long over a block of wood laying down...

**RD:** A stick of stove wood.

**WH:** ...and you would get on it and bounce. One of them would stand up on the end and somebody would come jump on this end and they would go five or six feet in the air sometimes.

**CM:** Or you would take a hoop and paddle. I run one a hundred thousand miles I think.

**RD:** He doesn't know what you just said.

**CM:** A hoop and paddle.

**JG:** Rolling a hoop?

**CM:** Well you take a hoop and you take a PA can back then...

**RD:** Prince Albert can.

**CM:** ...and you bend it up to where your hook won't be so hard to hold and an ax handle and put that tobacco can on that ax handle and just roll that old hoop and roll it up a dirt road.

**WH:** You nail the can in the bottom of the ax handle and you take your hoop then, your can is bent around and roll it down the road.

**JG:** Then you just run along beside it and roll it around.

**CM:** This fellow, you know when progress began to be made and scientific progress I guess you would say, televisions came out is what I'm trying to say, well you know, Daniel Boone was on a certain time of the week and Daniel Boone would throw that hatchet or ax and he would split that log, you know.

**WH:** That was his Indian friend.

**CM:** Yes, one of them would throw an ax, but this fellow said "I don't believe he hit that log every night" (laughter).

**JG:** What is that?

**CM:** He thought he was having to do that every night. He didn't realize it was a repetition, you know. (laughter) He said, "I don't believe he hit that log every night." So, he would sit there and wait for him to miss that log. That is when he finally came up with the idea "I don't believe he can do it. He can't throw one that many times without missing."

**JG:** I'm sure somewhere on TV he is still doing it. They are probably playing it somewhere.

**CM:** Well, like he didn't believe they went to the moon, you know, there is just no way. He said they went up on some mountain and took them pictures. His idea and his heart and his mind he never did believe it either.

**JG:** Now who is that again who are we talking about?

**CM:** This fellow I was talking about awhile ago that was like my brother there. He didn't...

**JG:** Was that the Havard, Charlie Havard.

**CM:** Charlie's cousin Alvin.

**JG:** Alvin, okay.

**CM:** He was a great guy. He just didn't believe they went to the moon. It was that simple.

**RD:** How long was it before he had a television, Cary?

**CM:** I don't know. Wrestling was the mainstay when it first came in. Everybody would go to somebody's house on Friday night to watch wrestling, then Charlie got one and that

is when Alvin started watching Daniel Boone and that is when he said that about, “I don’t believe he hit that log every night.”

**WH:** Around ’57 or ’58.

**CM:** Before then I believe. I was already in Germany in ’57.

**WH:** Well we got our first one in ’56.

**CM:** Early ’50’s I guess. That is just little old things that you...it was funny but it was life, you know.

**JG:** So what did everybody think about this TV, first time you got a TV or the first time you saw a television? What was that like – do you remember the first time you saw one? Was it in somebody’s home or was it in a store in Lufkin?

**CM:** They received it better than they did the telephone. Now, when the telephone first came in, of course I wasn’t born, but it was in the thirties. I’m a ’37 model so it was early thirties that they strung that wire, you know, and a bunch of those Havard boys didn’t think they could talk over a wire. I’m not going to repeat their language, but (laughter) they said nobody could talk over a wire, you know. So, anyway, one of them, the operator hooked up the phone, well not the operator but whoever hooked their phone up at the house told him to ring that old thing and so the operator answered. So, this Havard boy said, “well who are you” and he said, “I’m the operator. What number do you want?” He said, “you ain’t no operator you’re Steve from around behind the house.” He told him to go to a bad place, you know. Oh me, stuff like that it really happened, you know, people wasn’t going to have that.

**JG:** Just couldn’t believe it huh?

**CM:** No, but I don’t remember anything like that about the television because the radio had already proceeded it, you know, and pretty well...

**JG:** So, it’s just a radio with pictures now.

**CM:** Yes, a radio with pictures and it was pretty well received.

**RD:** Jonathan you got to keep in mind, you got to put this in perspective now, he is talking about a place that today is one of the most remote places in Angelina County, for sure. And, back in those days it was even more remote than now.

**CM:** When they brought the electricity, that was after you and I were in high school friend. TP&L [Texas Power and Light] brought the line to Saron and REA [Rural Electrification Administration] brought it around to Daddy’s so, REA bunch was hooking Jack Havard’s house, he said “how much is it?” They said it’s a flat rate of \$1.50 a month

if you don't use but "x" amount of kilowatts. So, he got his pencil out and he cussed and he said that is a nickel a day. He said "that is highway robbery, I won't pay it."

**JG:** Nowadays you spend that every time you turn a light switch on just turning it on.

**CM:** But now he flat said that. I could document that pretty well if I could bring some of those people back.

**JG:** A nickel a day.

**CM:** He said, "Highway robbery, a nickel a day, I won't pay it." And he didn't. And he told all the people from REA, he said, "You might as well not bring that down here; these people won't pay their bill." But, they did.

**RD:** You get addicted to it.

**WH:** I guess Saron was a little more remote than up on the river because Cary was saying they had phones up there in the thirties well, it was 1957 before we got phones in Saron. Bryan Byrd was the main reason we got phones.

**RD:** Tax Assessor Collector.

**WH:** Huh?

**RD:** He was tax assessor collector.

**WH:** Bryan was at that time?

**RD:** Yes.

**WH:** It was...we didn't have bathrooms until probably '58 or '59. We had an old outhouse. We didn't have running water, well my grandpa dug a well and we finally ran a line from his house to my house and we had running water.

**RD:** Did you capture it off the roof before that?

**WH:** Yes, we had a cistern that most everybody in the community had a cistern before they started digging wells.

**JG:** Did the cisterns ever go dry like this drought we had last summer, when we didn't get rain for two or three months?

**WH:** Well yes, if we had a drought like this.

**JG:** What did y'all do if your cistern ran out?

**CH:** You just had to haul water from a branch.

**WH:** Or a spring.

**CH:** Clean out a spring somewhere. We have to do that a lot, clean out an old spring branch where the springs were and let it settle and start, you know, when it would be a dry year or something haul our water. We had a well that went dry, so I guess that was a water table dropping then. We didn't realize what it was.

**JG:** Tell about hunting a little bit. We talked a little bit about fishing. You mentioned some of these things.

**CM:** Well, we hunted deer with dogs and everything with dogs, squirrels with dogs and we had hunting dogs mostly.

**JG:** How prized was a good hunting dog?

**CM:** Well enough that you didn't want to loan him to anybody because he would mess him up. It wasn't that they minded you borrowing the dog but they were real strict about the fact that you might could break him from some of his habits, you know.

**JG:** Confuse him.

**CM:** Confuse him, yes, and they didn't like that at all. I didn't blame them. I didn't want to loan mine either. I deer hunted most of the time with dogs and we wanted fast dogs, something that could smoke them and, you know, get people that could kill them if they came out by them. We would put standers out and from the time I was big enough we would get to sit on car fenders and there were hardly any deer in this country. That is surprising to a lot of people, but Daddy killed his first deer when I was a big old boy, twelve or fourteen years old and there just wasn't any deer. We would get on a car fender and ride for miles trying to find a fresh track, put the dog out on it and see if he could smoke it or jump the deer well we would run and get on stands if it was where we could you know.

**JG:** What type of rifle or shotgun would you use?

**WH:** Most everybody used shotguns then.

**JG:** Shotguns, okay. Buckshot?

**CM:** Oh yes, double aught buckshot usually was the mainstay.

**WH:** Mostly 12 gauge. There was a few 20 gauge, 16 gauge never did catch on around here. But, there was a little competition between the dogs. Cary's daddy had a dog named old Bozo and my daddy had a dog named Candy and they were probably pretty equal and they were both one of the best deer dogs in the country. Opening morning I've seen cars a

half mile long at our house, people coming from everywhere to go hunting on opening morning. Well...

**CM:** His dad, if he had something to go into infamy about it, would have been a deer hunt because he loved to hunt with dogs, you know.

**JG:** Well what breeds of dogs were these two?

**WH:** Well old Candy was a little pencil tailed redbone out of Louisiana. Now, don't ask me what a pencil tail redbone is. She wasn't a big dog she was a small dog. She didn't have long ears but you could see the redbone in her and she had a small tail. I guess that is where they called them pencil tail.

**CH:** Bozo was a black and tan.

**JG:** Was what?

**CH:** Black and tan.

**JG:** Tan?

**WH:** Black and tan. (laughter)

**RD:** That is a breed of a dog a black and tan.

**JG:** Oh was it, okay.

**WH:** They make real good coon dogs.

**CH:** Most of them were slow though. We looked for one that had a little cur dog in him that would be faster. They usually made a better dog and they didn't run as long.

**JG:** Would you use the same dogs for deer as you would for squirrels?

**CH:** We could on Bozo but very few we ever had we could do that on.

**JG:** What about coon, was there much coon hunting?

**CM:** Oh all the time. There was so many coons when my daddy, we was talking about that tractor awhile ago that the first year we raised corn in that river bottom we killed 160 something. We wouldn't even count them if we didn't kill them out of the corn patch. And, I mean that would tell you something, 160 coons will demolish...they would come from as far as Saron which was four or five miles because we would run a lot of them down to Saron from the patch. The dog would get after them and that is how far they would come to eat that corn.

**RD:** Why don't you tell him about those fiest dogs you had.

**CM:** Sam Palmer, my neighbor, was another hero of mine and he didn't believe in hounds, he liked little fiest and he had a stock of dogs that he got from S. E. Mitchell.

**JG:** Now spell that, fiest?

**CM:** F-i-e-s-t, correct me if I'm wrong.

**JG:** F-i-e-s-t, I'm not familiar with that.

**CM:** Yes, it's a terrier type dog.

**JG:** A terrier dog, okay.

**CM:** Yes, but Slim was our next door neighbor. He lived about three or four miles away, but he had those dogs and it would make Daddy so mad because they would tree coons and they could wind them. Daddy's black and tans had the trail on the ground. Well it was just like an air compressor going along the dust would be so dry in the summer time and those poor old hounds just couldn't smell. About that time that fiest would tree...

**JG:** Because he could smell it.

**CM:** He could wind them.

**JG:** Smell it in the wind, okay.

**CM:** And, Slim would say, "there it is" and that was just like pouring hot water on Daddy's back because he was usually there too. Oh we laughed about that. Me and Dick, we were talking about how Daddy was so, he had some of the best coon dogs in the world. Everybody knew that but each dog has an advantage, you know, that fiest can work a hound to death under situations like that.

**RD:** We were at their house one night, two or three of us boys went in there to hunt with them and we kind of...it was the first time I ever seen a fiest coon dog and we kind of ridiculed his dad, you know, a little bit about those little old dogs couldn't kill a coon. So, we kept on and about the last one we treed that night he says okay we will have a demonstration. I don't remember just exactly what he said but we got that coon out and those little old dogs killed that coon just like that.

**CM:** They knew just exactly how to fight them. They had their little place. One of them would try to catch him right in top of the head and they would throw him. Now that is the same way Charlie and Alvin would do with a hog. Alvin would throw his loop down behind the hog and Charlie would always be at the front. As soon as he saw that loop he would back that hog up by going towards him a little bit and when the old hog backed up into that loop Alvin would jerk it and then Charlie, he was so good with the rope, he



would rope his nose or head. One would go one way one would go the other. They would pop that hog just like clockwork and those little old dogs had the same practice with a coon. They would have that coon stretched out and there wasn't nothing he could do about it and one would come in there and get him by the throat, bye.

**RD:** And it didn't take them long to do it.

**CM:** It didn't take them long to do it.

**RD:** I figured that coon would tear them all to pieces but he didn't.

**CM:** But now, he got that stock of dogs, if I'm not crazy, from Sherman Mitchell, he had the Studebaker place in Lufkin, S. C. Mitchell.

**JG:** Now Mr. Havard you mentioned as kids y'all used to mark the ears and tails maybe of armadillos doing what you saw your parent's generation doing with hogs.

**WH:** Right, everybody had a mark on their hogs so.

**JG:** Yes, that is what I was going to ask you. Mr. Modisette you mentioned earlier, early on that wild hogs ran in the woods. I was going to ask you did everybody have their marks and how did you round up the hogs and know whose was whose? Did you trap them or what?

**CM:** You had to depend on your neighbor being honest. There was no other route and most of them were.

**JG:** Because you couldn't tell unless you had the hog at hand whose mark it was right?

**CM:** Yes, I didn't say all of them were honest but most of them were. Thank the Lord!

**JG:** Did everybody know everybody's mark?

**CM:** Yes sir, and could spot it as fast as they could...that is so and so's hog.

**JG:** What was your family's mark?

**CM:** I don't remember. I was sitting here trying to remember. It was a crop and a swallow fork and an under bit and it was in the left ear. What all did they have? The split, the swallow fork, the crop...

**RD:** The under bit and over bit.

**LH:** Yes.

**CM:** The over bit. I can't remember all those marks.

**JG:** In 1879 the state of Texas passed a log brand law and they chopped or gauged with an ax the logs that were floated. That was in the days before the railroads came up here and they were doing most of the log floating down the Neches.

**CM:** Right.

**JG:** And I think if I remember right the first year they enacted that law was 1879 and there were over 90, I think 94 different marks registered in the Jefferson County courthouse. That is Beaumont (**CM:** Beaumont) and that gives you an indication of how many but it was the same thing, the ownership of the log, because you cut them out in the woods and you drop them in the river and you float them down. And, the neat thing about Beaumont was there were four big sawmills there (**CM:** Right) and they were all interrelated by marriage. There were four daughters of a prominent lumberman and all the big lumber companies came out of the sons that married this man's daughters. But, they had an honor code you might say, as these logs would float down and each mill, they didn't bother sorting them out they just took whatever logs were convenient to them and took them up then they would have someone there to register the mark, the chop or the gauge which is kind of interesting because that is the same principal of doing that.

**CM:** That is amazing.

**JG:** Of course when railroads came in that kind of did away with the river floating.

**CM:** It stopped that.

**JG:** Again this was many years ago.

**WH:** Speaking of being honest, there was an old cousin of mine rented our house one time at Saron, I was already grown, but it's been several years ago and I went around the smoke house looking around and I seen an old .22 up there and the guy was out there I said, "whose gun is that?" He told me so and so and he said "do you want it? I'll give it to you." He said it belonged to a certain fellow that he knew, that everybody knew. I said, "yes I'll take it." It was an old .22 that you had to pull the little deal back on the back of it to shoot it. I went a few days later and told my grandpa. I said, "Papa this is Marvin give me this gun and he said it belonged to so and so." He looked at this gun and he said this gun has probably stole a lot of my hogs. (laughter) So, that is...there was certain people known that you had to watch and certain ones that they knew was honest. So, I told the guy's grandson years later, I said I've got this gun and I'm going to give it to you. It belonged to your grandpa.

**CM:** Charlie saved my life. He didn't know how he did it but he always told me, said now most hogs doesn't really want to attack you. He said they will run right up to you and then they'll either stop or they will turn, but he said every now and then one will get you if he can. So, me and Daddy was getting hogs out of that pasture I was telling you about that belonged to Angelina County Lumber Company and they had planted pine

seedlings and the hogs were getting pretty bad and we were having to get them out, so we chased one one day until he decided he wasn't going to run no more and I had an old pine knot in my hand I had found; I liked it because it was pretty. It looked like a little baseball bat but it was short, solid pine and I was just kind of using because we were in some of those high hills over there and when we finally bayed that hog again that hog had all he wanted and the dog was not a catch dog so he didn't have anything to offer. So, he run at me and I thought about what Charlie said. He said if one ever gets close to you, he said don't move. He said wait until he gets, I mean, right at you. He said a hog can't turn quick, they are a step bodied and I never knew that, you know, and he said, he can't just turn like a dog or something can and he said he will have to run by you because he can't turn around. If you'll wait 'till the last minute and then jump out of his way he will cut at you with his tusk on one side. But, when he come by me that old hog he had blood in his eye, boy. I hit that thing between the eyes with everything I had. I jumped sideways just like Charlie said and I played it to the hip and hit him just like he was a baseball right between the eyes, killed that old big hog. He weighed about 300 pounds, you know, and he was something. I didn't know my daddy was watching that. He was over there across the canyon over there. He come over there and he said, "Boy you are a dangerous man." (laughter)

**RD:** I think so too.

**CM:** I said, "No I'm not dangerous." I said, "That thing meant to hit me." He said, "He sure did he was after you." But...

**WH:** Speaking of hunting, my daddy was notorious for hunting and he night hunted. I didn't know what beef was until I was half grown. We was raised on venison and biscuits and mother cooked biscuits three times a day and we had venison probably twice a day and every year the first morning of deer season he'd usual have a buck hanging up in a tree that he had killed the night before.

**RD:** Let me interrupt you a little bit, deer season didn't mean a whole lot though. That is just when they did it openly.

**WH:** People killed deer to eat, they wasn't worried about the horns or anything. They fed their family with them. It was just like going to the river and catching fish. To them they knew they were breaking the law but, it wasn't breaking the law to them and everybody did it.

**CM:** It was a way of life.

**WH:** Sure. I started hunting oh, I guess I was six years old when I started hunting. Now, daddy wouldn't let me hunt on Sunday. He said you can hunt anytime you want to but you are not going to hunt on Sunday. And, he wasn't the man that went to church but, he respected the church that much.

**CM:** Some things come down through, you know, handed down and that was one of them.

**WH:** Yes.

**CM:** That is the way my folks were.

**RD:** How many hogs would y'all kill a year?

**WH:** We didn't have hogs in the woods, Daddy never did, now all the rest of the community had hogs.

**CM:** Seems like I remember in the fall in the first big cold snap, you know, was when it took place and four or five big hogs would be about what we would butcher and that pretty well take us through the winter I guess. I don't really remember cranking that old...I was glad I didn't like hog killing. That is a lot of hard work man.

**JG:** Describe it.

**CM:** Well you got to get you a...we had a big old wash pot, you know, we would heat that water to boiling, you know, and we had an old barrel that was set in the ground at an angle and you know, for a kid when he doesn't weigh but about 110 pounds back then having to grab half a hog and put him in that barrel. In other words we would heat the water, put it in the barrel and scalding hot and set that or try to get that hog in there and out without setting the hair on him.

**WH:** Yes, you couldn't get your water too hot or it would set the hair on the hog. That is what they claimed.

**CM:** And then you couldn't get it off but if you had your water just right that took some doings man. So, two people, you know, grab the old hog by the front and back legs, you know, and then that barrel you know you would turn him around and let the head stay a little bit longer and pull him out on the place, usually boards or something. It had to be a pretty clean place but anyway that is when the big butcher knives came out and you scraped the hair off that hog.

**WH:** If you had some hair that wouldn't come off you put a toe sack over it and get you some hot water and put on there...

**CM:** Heat it again.

**WH:** ...and heat it again and it would make that hair come off.

**CM:** So, you kept the water hot in your wash pot and it was a pretty good deal. One thing about it, it felt good because it was warm that old heat around that fire.

**RD:** In cold weather.

**CM:** I'll never forget that boy!

**JG:** How long would it take to finish a hog out from getting... starting your morning, your day or whatever, start with the water building your fire to the end?

**CM:** Well, if you had four or five to kill you figure on half a day, you know at the very least.

**LH:** A good half a day.

**CM:** Yes, and that was those bragging guys that told how fast they could scrap one, you know. But, you got to hang that thing up then and if you have got four of them the first thing you do is hang them up by the back feet and gut them and that takes some precision man that they never would let me do. My dad wanted that part of it because he didn't want to cut into an intestine, you know. But, lots of times if the weather was not as cold as we thought it was going to be or something they would swell you know, and boy you really had to be careful then.

**RD:** Had to get that smoke and that salt on them pretty quick because you didn't want them to ruin.

**CM:** Oh yes, put that salt on there until you would think they had surely ruined that meat, but they didn't.

**WH:** The first thing a lot of them would do is split that head open and get the brains and take them in the house and they would have brains and eggs and brains.

**CM:** Eggs, not me.

**WH:** I didn't like them either...and chitlings.

**JG:** Where did you get your salt?

**CM:** They would buy it in 100 pounds or fifty. Was it 100 or 50?

**RD:** Fifty, I think Cary. That is the way it was at Tisdale when I worked there.

**CM:** I remember several bags of it we would always buy. Man oh man!

**WH:** But, there wasn't anything better than going in the smoke house and smelling that smoke meat. Oh I can still smell that! Take your knife and cut you a strip off and chew on it half the day.

**RD:** Did either one of you have a potato house?

**CM:** We had a potato house and it was...really I didn't understand it too much as to what the deal was but, I guess the cool...it was built low for some reason it was always a low lying building and...

**RD:** Was it dug into a bank a little bit?

**CM:** Yes, dug into a bank if you had one and if not you throw dirt around the sides of it to...had lots of ways that...did you mention to John about the Tejas Indians paying with gold. Did y'all ever discuss that?

**RD:** No.

**CM:** We got into that the other day but you might not want it with this. I didn't know, but it was always told to me that the Tejas Indians had gold that they paid...they bought with gold. And, I had talked to a geologist about that old lead mine down below Shawnee Creek and that geologist said where there was lead there was gold, a little, at least a little I believe is the way he said it. There would be some gold with any lead mine you could look for a measure of gold to be there which it might have been more than one lead mine that the Indians knew about that we didn't know anything about. Was that not them that was killed? When they would lay their corn by in the summer they would go to High Island or places like that on the coast and spend the summer and come back in the fall and there was people that knew and heard about their gold that waylaid them, killed a bunch of them, and I never did know. It was somewhere down around Saratoga where they were waylaid. They waylaid a bunch of them and got their gold because they were peaceable Indians. They didn't bother nobody from what I heard. I didn't know if you had that in mind or not. Did you ever study that?

**JG:** Well, not that particular one, but I've looked at some of that.

**CM:** That is just stuff I heard when I was a kid.

**JG:** Talk a little bit more about your father. You said he was a fire tower man and he worked for the Texas Forest Service, but did I understand you to say that he was somehow connected to a game preserve or did I misunderstand you?

**CM:** Angelina County Lumber Company had 10,000 acres fenced off that they made a game preserve out of. It went almost to Zavalla. It went over to the Poulard place because I remember going over there and then back over to where we lived up the River Road. So, we would start on Saturday or I would, that is what I learned to hate a horse. Get out and have to ride that thing, took all day to go around it and any gate that was blown out by the water or the flood you would have to reset it and the fence.

**JG:** So, it was barbed wire?

**CM:** Yes, patch the fence if it got broke or a limb fell on it or tree fell on it. So, you had to carry some tools with you and it was a rough ride. Boy by the time I got grown I wouldn't have had a horse if they would have been five cents apiece. I wouldn't have bought one.

**JG:** So, your dad worked for Angelina Lumber Company doing that?

**CM:** Yes he did because that was a side, part time job. He worked actually for Texas Forest Service.

**RD:** Did you know Bill Wright?

**CM:** Oh yes, knew him like a...he sat at our house...the first time that rascal came over there we didn't know if he was a game warden all right but he was a game biologist and a whole lot different from what we thought. He became a real close friend of ours. Daddy was telling him about killing a little old deer with (laughing) and my grandmother was sitting up there and she didn't know anything about the game laws I don't guess, she said Charles is that that little deer with horns about that long (laughter). Daddy turned red as a beet, but yes we loved old Bill and he turned out to be a close friend of ours.

**JG:** So, would your dad have been a pasture rider? Would that have been a name?

**CM:** He made his son ride that ignorant pasture and burned him out completely.

**WH:** But not a pasture rider in the sense of trying to catch people hunting.

**CM:** Oh no, just keeping the fence up and the hogs out.

**WH:** Just checking the fence.

**JG:** Because I know some of Temple's pastures, their pasture riders, and I'm talking in the twenties now, did all of it, you know, maintained the fences...

**CM:** No their danger would have been I would have killed a bunch of those deer.

**JG:** ...and kept the fences up, keep people out and of course there was still like Charlie Harbor I mentioned. His family actually lived inside the fenced areas and he had mentioned at some point the company, Southern Pine Lumber Company, bought out, you know, basically just tried to relocate the people and get them off the land. But, they paid them money for all their hog marks, basically we will pay you a certain amount of money, you just transfer all your marks to us and things like that. But, he has told me stories about actually gun fights that they used to have over in Trinity County. Did y'all ever here about things like that in Angelina County?

**WH:** Oh yes!

**JG:** Okay. Do you care to share anything of that?

**CM:** You Wynndy?

**WH:** No.

**CM:** I can't think of anything right now that would be pertaining to it.

**RD:** What about William Crain?

**CM:** I'm sorry.

**RD:** William Crain?

**CM:** William Crain, he was like my...he was a neighbor that you couldn't beat him. He was just people helped one another and he was one of the best for a neighbor. He didn't like us running deer with dogs, but you know, we still got along. We didn't have any problems. I don't think he would have killed a dog of mine if he would have known it was mine but he had been accused. I'm not sure he ever killed one, but you know, that was some of those things you were talking about awhile ago that gets into a war almost.

**JG:** I think the Rayville Pasture used to be what is now South and Boggy Slough and it was often told the man who headed it and it was told by more than one person that he did not like dogs being in his cattle pasture and he and all his men if you see a dog you shoot them. Now, some of his men had dogs, cattle dogs and so he just didn't want deer hunting dogs getting into his.

**CM:** Well, they just didn't understand. A lot of old timers thought if you take a couple of dogs to a place every deer in there would leave. That is the furthest thing from the truth. You could take a dog in there fifty times and if there were fifty deer in there one of them would leave and all 49 would stay in there. We watched that coon hunting. You could see them with the light. They would lay there and watch a dog go right by them and never move. They wouldn't be twenty yards from them. I realized that deer didn't look at things like we do.

**RD:** Well a walker hound changed that a little bit though. Those walker hounds were different.

**CM:** Well I used to tell them I said "I promise you if you'll make the same drive twice you'll jump just as fast as you did the first time" because those deer don't leave. You'll just get after another one. We proved it over and over. And, James Allen was telling one time about a big old deer they were after. They all wanted to kill him because they had all seen him, an eleven point, and they realized that every time they would start putting out the standers and then whenever the dogs would jump the dogs would come through the stand but it wouldn't be any deer there. They thought the dogs was lying at first, you know, then they realized that deer was smart enough that when they put those standers



out and he heard those car doors slam he just eased out. Then when the dogs came through running he had been gone and long forgot about, you know. So, somebody went down there one day and got ahead of where he usually crossed and killed him I think on the second, they heard him shoot on the second stander when they was putting them out. He had done started easing off and he shot him. They are very smart.

**RD:** Do you remember the altercation with William Crain and David and Mrs. Crain there at the Shawnee Prairie Church?

**CM:** No, I don't. I never did. I think I must have been in Germany.

**RD:** I was gone is the reason I was asking you about it.

**CM:** I was.

**RD:** I heard about it when I came back here.

**CM:** I can't remember any vivid recollection of anything like that except I know I've heard just what you've said right there. Did you know anything about it?

**RD:** Well the only thing about it is they had accused I think the (unintelligible) is who I think it was if I remember correctly, they accused William of killing their dog, which, I don't doubt for a minute that he did probably and David had gone to a party in Zavalla and they had seen him or something, so they went back up to the church house and waited for him on his way home. But just luckily William and his wife were worried about the same thing, so they came out and David didn't even know they were behind him, but they were following David home and so, they had stopped David there at the church house and were fixing to...I say fixing to...

**CM:** Well it must have been down at Lambert's Chapel Church then.

**RD:** I was thinking it was at the Shawnee.

**CM:** Was it Shawnee Prairie?

**RD:** I think it was Shawnee Prairie Church is what I was thinking about. But anyway they were about to accost him and Mr. and Mrs. Crain came up and it wound up she hit one of the boys. They were after William and David, but she interfered and she had a big pair of pliers or a crescent wrench or something and she hit one of the boys on the hand and there were charges filed and everything.

**WH:** Something over the same deal happened; I think William and Chuck Kirkland got into it one time, the best I remember. Now I can't remember the details.

**RD:** Bless his heart he had a lot of trouble; I know that, with hunters. People just ran roughshod over his pasture, I know that.

**CM:** Yes, it was uncalled for really on both sides if they could have just talked.

**WH:** I've known people it would thrill them...you could drive by Mr. Crain's house about any time and see deer out there. He had a lot of deer and some of these old outlaw boys, the younger ones, it would just thrill them to drive by there and shoot one within sight of his house and just leave it laying there. Now, that is just sorry but I've known some of them that would do it.

**JG:** I was going to ask you a little bit about property ownership and access to the woods and access to the river and things like that. Do you care to comment on anything specifically especially as it relates to today? I know we have looked at issues of river access. Where can you put a boat in and where can you do this and where can you do that? And, there is just not very many places, you know, and I know from your experiences just what I've heard today there were more people out and about and doing things like that, so how did that work back then?

**CM:** The only thing that comes to my mind is that W. T. Carter, that was primary owner of the timberland in that area at that time with the exception of that 10,000 acres that Angelina County Lumber Company owned, that they had a lot of squatters. People had squatted on the land and they had a large court case in Livingston at the county seat of Polk County. I guess Camden is probably the reason. Is Camden in Polk County?

**RD:** Yes.

**CM:** And they actually had Percy Foreman, one of the lawyers of lawyers I guess of the thirties and forties, fifties. I guess somewhere in the fifties and they got a lot of that land back. They didn't get all of it back but pretty well where people were living I think they may have let them keep living but the way they settled the case I thought was unique. They took pieces of timber, took them to the court room and they peeled that hull back on that. You couldn't see it from the outside but maybe you could barely see it, I don't know, but what they told was that in the courtroom they would take one of those deals and hull that bark off that pine and there would be that old scar and it would mark W. T. Carter's, you know, so they gained a lot of there...I always thought that was neat the way that they presented that case with that evidence of those timbered pieces, you know, still having the marks on the witness trees wasn't it.

**RD:** Witness trees, yes.

**JG:** I know back even the twenties on I was telling you about Charlie Harbor, you know, these lumber companies as that evolved I think they bought the land, they bought the timber and there were people already living on it and as time went on what a lot of the big lumber companies tried to do was have these acknowledgement of tenancy records and it was actually a legal document that they would get the families, because the lumber companies wanted to keep the peace too.

**CM:** Yes, they were trying hard to get along it looked to me like.

**JG:** So, they would basically approach a family and say okay we are acknowledging that you are living here and you can live here as long as your elder generation or whatever they could work out. It might be one generation or two generations or whatever and you can continue to live here, here is what you can do, here is what you can't do but you are acknowledging that you don't own anything. We are just letting you...and it would be a binding legal document and so basically they could exist or continue to exist the way they pretty much had but from the lumber company's interest their main thing was on paper so that some point in the future they won't have those claims because these people are already signing documents saying we acknowledge that we don't own this and we are just being allowed to live here and continue to and in some cases maybe hunt. I mentioned Charlie Harbor talked about it. Eventually the companies would buy out the hog marks and whatever else and phase that out, so I think that is kind of an interesting part of history. Tell me, both of you I guess are about ten years apart, but you had access to the river and did your hunting and your fishing. Today if we were going to do something like that we are pretty limited to where we could put a boat in the river. Where did y'all do that?

**CM:** Well, at that time in the thirties and forties we had access but the first thing I remember that began to be trouble was Charles Wilson met up, I don't know how many times he was running for office at the time. He was Temple's...

**JG:** You're talking about the Congressman, Charlie Wilson.

**CM:** Yes, he became a Congressman but he was State Representative then.

**JG:** Right, okay.

**CM:** But, he saw what was going on and he come and told us he said, "Y'all are sitting around and letting all of this come and just close in around you and it's going to squeeze you plum out." He said, "What you going to do?" He said, "If you don't watch it they are going to lease these places and you are not going to have a place to hunt and before they do that they will probably stop dogs from running." Everything the old boy said was true, as true could be and it eat us up and everybody said what can we do, you know. We just kept a hunting but every year we would lose a little ground until finally no place to hunt and no dogs to run and they enforced it. Once I didn't have a dog I quit. I haven't hunted since. I haven't killed a deer in fifty years, I don't imagine.

**JG:** So where would you put your boats in?

**CM:** We had places along the river that belonged to W. T. Carter that they didn't care, you know, so we would go...

**JG:** Just kind of community spots where y'all were, it wasn't a state maintained boat ramp or anything just places that were good?

**CM:** About three or four places at Saron and then between Saron and Lambert's Chapel up there three or four places and in between Lambert's Chapel and Weaver's Bend it was three or four places and it was like that all the way up the river.

**JG:** Nobody enforced any type of ownership or restrictions or hey this is my property get off.

**LH:** It belonged to the lumber companies.

**CM:** But see W. T. Carter sold out and then when they did the other companies started leasing the land and then it was just a matter of time you couldn't hunt here.

**WH:** You would have a natural boat ramp. You would have an old slough coming off the river and there would be a place going into that slough you would just back up and unload your boat right there in that old slough if the river was high enough. And that is how you unloaded your boat and if it wasn't take about four of you and...

**JG:** You never had to ask permission from anybody or anything?

**CM:** No, no.

**WH:** No, not until I was grown, shoot I guess I was...

**CM:** There was a few of the people even who leased land from W. T. Carter; they usually were some of their own hands of authority, like Southland leased that up there, that liked to cause a war and uh..but, man oh man, that was a hot place for somebody to get shot for several years. It was because he had leased some of Carter's land and made a pasture out of it.

**RD:** Cary I remember one time that I was hunting and I think Gerald and I were together, I think that is right, it's so foggy in my mind, but we were going through there somewhere and we came up on a road block. Travis Wayne and L. T., is that his brother maybe?

**CM:** He had a brother named L. T. yes, a little guy.

**RD:** L. T. and Travis and somebody else had put a road block across the road and it was all over hunting rights. Do you remember anything about that?

**CM:** I don't remember Travis Wayne's part of it and don't remember how he figured in it. He was Travis's boy. Travis had four boys I believe, Grover, Travis Wayne, L. T. and Pee Wee and Charles, you know the one I told you would come over here, and I don't remember him being anything but cross ways with Southland that had the pasture.

**RD:** I guess that is what it was.

**CM:** They might have been in there tearing up his fence or something. If I remember right they were dead set against anything he did, you know.

**JG:** The communities where y'all grew up, how many people, you described working the land, hunting, fishing, the crops that you had, kind of self subsistence. How many people would have worked for the lumber companies in those communities?

**WH:** According to what period of time it was.

**CM:** Well directly or indirectly practically all of them in one way or another. You know, you have people hauling, cutting, surveyors, you had everybody I know up and down that river were connected one way or the other almost.

**WH:** When they brought the grading into Camden and cross the river to the Angelina side my grandpa, my daddy, my great grandpa all of them...

**CM:** They did the grade work and all that on all that old...

**WH:** ...I had an uncle that hunted and provided game for them, Rayburn. Rayburn Day.

**CM:** Yes, he was their provisionary wasn't he?

**WH:** Yes.

**CM:** Okay.

**JG:** I think they crossed the river in the early or mid twenties I think.

**WH:** Yes, Tyler County.

**CM:** They came back again in the forties, they redid that tram, the old Manning tram and came back over here for the second time, logged everything out and then left.

**WH:** See, I never knew the difference in the trams but the one coming from Manning down through Saron was completely different from the one coming from the other side of the river on this side and I never knew that until about two years ago. I just never connected it for some reason. I was talking to Burlon and he explained all of it to me and told me everything about it.

**CM:** Well see, the second time they came in they didn't run the route from the mill because there was no mill. The mill burned so everything was at Camden, so they were having to haul everything back to Camden.

**JG:** And y'all know this probably the Manning mill was the Carter Kelly Lumber Company...

**LH:** Right.

**CM:** Right.

**JG:** ...which was joint ownership and so Carter had the mill at Camden so they kind of joined their operations so, you know, some of the timber could go to Camden and some could go to Manning. The river didn't separate them as before it did.

**CM:** See after I was born there wasn't much of Manning left.

**JG:** Yes, I think it burned in '35 I believe so it was two years before you were born.

**CM:** Two years before I was born, so all I could get was just memories that Miriam wrote about.

**WH:** Well that is what I was fixing to say, I remember Camden, I mean Manning through Memories with Miriam because she wrote about it and made it so just like you would be there, you know, dirty streets, pumpkin hill and all them places.

**CM:** Daddy said he drove out there one day to go to work and, see he worked at Manning and lived out on the River Road, but he would drive back and forth so he said he and Woody Paige. Do you remember Woody?

**RD:** I do.

**CM:** Woody is Billy's daddy and they were going out there and Woody was working for Daddy and they found a body laying beside the road, so Daddy thought Woody was a little bit young and he was going to have a little fun, and he said "now Woody" he said, "You don't drive and the law says one of us has to go get the authorities and the other one has to stay with the body, so you are going to stay with the body." Woody was a little bit tongue tied you know. He called Daddy C. A. and he said, "C. A. he doing all wight before we dot here, he be doing all wight when we get back." He said, "I ain't about to stay with him." And, he didn't! (laughter)

**JG:** What happened to the fellow?

**CM:** Somebody killed him that night. It was a pretty rough place. It was just on the edge of Manning there. You can imagine like the edge of Houston in a smaller scale, but just as rough or worse I guess.

**RD:** Oh I tell you what!

**WH:** Well I had some kinfolks that went to the pen, of course I never did know them, because they robbed the commissary and he went to the pen over it.

**JG:** The Manning commissary?

**WH:** Yes.

**JG:** Yes, it may have happened more than once but we've got some clippings on that.

**WH:** Leo Day I think was the one. I've been told this now.

**JG:** The train was robbed too from Manning, the payroll train one year.

**WH:** I didn't know that.

**CM:** There is a lot of people that will tell you today, still living, that will tell you Quantrill is buried right here in Angelina County.

**RD:** Out there close to Bald Hill somewhere out in there.

**CM:** I don't know where it is but, they swear that he...that this was his last.

**WH:** See, I have a great great-grandpa that supposedly rode with Quantrill. They said he would leave and be gone for months at a time and then come in. Nobody knew where he went and maybe a month or two later he would leave again and be gone for several months during that time frame. It was never proven I don't think and there is no way to prove it.

**RD:** Well Wynn that rock out crop down there by George Allen's camp house, do you know the one I'm talking about?

**WH:** The one where they...

**RD:** The rock pressure they set up down there.

**WH:** Yes.

**RD:** Yes, okay, there is a cave there and there is a real prominent Havard engraved in that rock at the mouth of that cave there. I just wondered if you knew anything about that.

**WH:** You know I saw that in a book, it might have been your book I don't know, but it was some book that I saw that in. I have never seen that actually. I didn't know it was there. Now which side of the river is it on?

**RD:** It's on the Angelina County side.

**JG:** What was the other name? It was Havard and Oliver?

**RD:** I don't remember Jonathan.

**JG:** I took a picture of it. We could look it up in a minute.

**RD:** The Havard letters are that big. Somebody put in some work doing that.

**WH:** Now, was there a piece in the paper here while back about that?

**RD:** If it was Jonathan put it in there.

**WH:** It was about Fort Teran and where the original Fort Teran they said was. It was on this side of the river instead of the other side.

**JG:** No, Fort Teran is not where the marker is now.

**WH:** Right.

**JG:** Now, there has been a lot written about it and some have suggested that it was on the Angelina County side, but I feel and Donovan feels the same way. We think we are pretty sure we know where it was. It was on the Tyler County side (**LH:** Okay) just below the mouth of Shawnee Creek. Do you know where the river does that? Here is Shawnee Creek coming down and the river does this.

**CM:** Oh yes.

**JG:** And right there is where the fort was. That is basically there has been a lot of research done on it so we didn't really do anything groundbreaking in that sense, but I guess it was last summer that we wanted to try to find, you know, supposedly the fort was put where the old road crossing was. The road crossing was there because of the old buffalo crossing, so knowing what we figured would be surely there would be indications along the river bank and the river bottom so the river was really low this summer so we found that place and it kind of confirms some of the other sources. But, in that bend there that whole river bottom is hard rock and it's got that gradual sloping bank on the Tyler County side so, we think that is where the actual fort was.

**WH:** Where is the Buffalo skull?

**JG:** A buffalo skull?

**WH:** Something in that article said a buffalo skull could still be seen. I mean, that didn't make any sense to me.

**JG:** I didn't write anything about that but now some of the legends were that some of the Mexicans had left gold in and around that area when they were fleeing and some of the



legends tell different markings, but crows foot any type of markings, trees and rocks and then you could use those points to try to triangulate where the gold was. I know my conclusion was if anybody found it they are not saying. And, I think Donovan has his own views, but I think Peter Ellis Bean, I don't know if y'all are familiar with him but, he was quite a character. He was the true entrepreneur maybe even rascal, scoundrel, whatever you want to call him.

**RD:** All the above!

**JG:** He was American by birth but a colonel in the Mexican army and through several different turn of events when Santa Anna came to power and later when Texas got its independence he was always on the winning side yet he still...anyway, he came out and he was in it for himself. I think if there was any gold anywhere near that area, because he was the commander at Fort Teran. He would have not only known about it but he would have been the one to get it. He lived until 1847 so I think he would have had access to it. So, I think it was just that. I think it was just stories.

**RD:** Sammy Joe Crain says old man Fed Rodrigger got it. You've heard of Fed?

**CM:** I heard of Fed, that Fed got it. I know some guys that went up to the Rodrigger place and they were going to...what do they have those things that you find money with?

**JG:** Metal detectors.

**CM:** They came back telling an awful ghost tail. They heard horses running and scared them half to death.

**JG:** Did they see the horses or just hear them?

**CM:** No, they just heard them. They never did go back.

**RD:** Cotton dug up \$30,000 under their front porch when the old man died or when he went to the hospital I believe. They told him where it was and Cotton went up there and got it.

**CM:** Got it up?

**RD:** Yes.

**CM:** Well I'll say. Well you know I've heard those old stories all my life and J. R. Day Rayburn declares that there at that curve that you were talking about awhile ago that there was a canon and he saw it when he was down there at the river.

**RD:** I've heard that so many times.

**CM:** But, I mean...

**JG:** Usually if it was somebody from Houston or Beaumont y'all scuba dive down there trying to find it.

**CM:** When it comes to a man a man will lie to you, but I'm not saying Rayburn was lying.

**RD:** He was a good fellow.

**WH:** He could have been mistaken.

**JG:** Well, that is the story too you know, the gold rammed cannon but that is common to a lot of places not just here, but you know, supposedly the Mexicans were fleeing. There could have been 2 occasions, 1832 was one of the little rebellions and that is when Santa Anna came to power and all the Texans, the Anglo Texans, were having their own little problems with the Mexican government. Well to get out of getting in trouble they declared in favor of Santa Anna so that got them off the hook for a few years and Santa Anna then became the enemy shortly thereafter. The facts are that, you know, the Mexicans had very little gold to start with. They were poorly paid and in fact the Anglos were a lot better off than the Mexicans.

**CM:** That was little Charlie Havard's theory. He said "are y'all crazy, didn't nobody have no gold." He said "we were so poor we couldn't pay attention."

**WH:** I mean what would they have been doing with it if they had it?

**JG:** Right. And, that is the thing, records of Peter Ellis Bean and his papers they are in the archives in Mexico and lots of other people have researched that. He is constantly writing and he was two, three, four years behind in getting paid himself. They just didn't have the money.

**CM:** Nothing to pay with, nobody had no gold.

**JG:** Now, that is another thing too if you go back 100 years in time when Spain had it all, all the gold went to Spain. It didn't stay here.

**RD:** By the boat load.

**CM:** And you know yourself if you knew about somebody burying somebody I would have went back and got it most likely and I think the average person would. But, I know some old boys that came over here to Diboll to a fortune teller to find out where that money was. (laughter) And, I can tell you, I'm not going to call their names either, get me a lawsuit, but one of them told me about it finally after we were grown and the woman told him said yes it's over there and there is a bunch of big old flat rocks. Well, shoot they knew where that was at and she said one of them rocks is broke and it's at the end of that broke rock. The only strange thing I saw in the whole deal was from what he

told me because I could see I had his confidence and he was telling me the truth I felt like, but how did she know where it was at. She was over here in Diboll. That is fifteen miles down there.

**JG:** Then why didn't she get it.

**CM:** Well, she told them she said "if one of y'all will bring your wife, I ain't going off with a bunch of men." She said "if one of you will bring your wife I'll take you down there and show you where that money is." And, this old boy said he went and got his wife and they went and got her and brought her down there and then of course all them others was boogying down there to see where the gold was. But, they got to talking about it and said you don't go all the way to them rocks you stop on this side about 250 yards or 300 yards so that is what he did. He said he pulled up there and it was just like she read every thought he had, said she hit that road, went down that road, they followed her right down there and she said there it is now take me back to Diboll. They took her back, of course they didn't find no money but he said when he got back that his brothers...that is where all that wild tell in Saron got started. Whenever they got back they couldn't get them boys to go back down there. They said they heard them horses, they heard noises, they heard all mannerisms of spooky stuff.

**JG:** This is broad daylight?

**CM:** Broad daylight, said they would never go back.

**JG:** But they heard enough to scare them off.

**CM:** And they managed to not ever go back to my knowledge. That took care of all their money hunting right now.

**JG:** Well, we never heard any horses did we?

**RD:** No, we didn't.

**WH:** Yes, but y'all probably didn't go to the money hole.

**JG:** We probably weren't in the right place.

**RD:** We weren't close to the money but we were at those flat rocks.

**JG:** We were all over the place didn't we? We were in all kinds...

**CM:** Well they said they thought enough about it they came back over here and asked the woman said, "why couldn't we find the money?" She said, "you had a man with you that wasn't supposed to be with you." That is what she told them.

**RD:** Oh! That explains all that.

**CM:** Explains it all right there doesn't it.

**RD:** Yes, it does.

**WH:** Can you tell me how the rocks down at the Rocky Ford got formed?

**RD:** Now which Rocky Ford?

**WH:** You go to Saron and...

**JG:** The crossing?

**WH:** Yes, at Shawnee Creek.

**JG:** At Shawnee Creek yes.

**RD:** Oh Shawnee Creek Rocky Ford where the highway used to go through there.

**WH:** Yes, where it looks like the rocks are cut.

**RD:** Well, that is that Catahoula rock I'm guessing what that is through there but it's part of the Caddo formation through there. That thing, those rocks as you know have sharp edges in there but, beyond that I can't tell you.

**JG:** It's all sandstone

**WH:** It looks like they were cut and set which I know they weren't.

**RD:** Yes, but you see that sandstone was formed in blocks like that. You see it everywhere. You can go around the blue hole over there and cut it and see where those blocks had those fishers down through there you know, and that is the only explanation I can give you.

**CM:** After watching all those old bricks up at Nacogdoches for all these years and they look like they have stayed right there just like they were put years ago, you know. Somebody could have put those in there, Wynnie.

**JG:** Did y'all ever go to the Blue Hole?

**CM:** Oh yes!

**WH:** Oh yes, I used to swim down there all the time.

**CM:** Yes, the clay pits we liked better.

**JG:** Now, that is over on the Angelina County side, yes.

**CM:** Yes.

**WH:** Yes, the Blue Hole got to where the college kids were coming down and messing it up. When I was younger all of us kids from around Zavalla and Saron would go to the Blue Hole. We had one great big huge rock up there you could stand on and had a rope tied to a big sweet gum tree and swing out there. I never would climb up in the sweet gum tree and dive out though.

**CM:** Well I know we've bored y'all this morning. (laughter)

**JG:** Well I've certainly enjoyed it. Do y'all care to add anything?

**CM:** I couldn't document a thing except Alvin digging that hole in the river.

**RD:** Well y'all didn't talk about logging in any way. Are either one of you familiar with the old logging they used to do with the bob tail truck logging and loading with horses and mules?

**CM:** Yes, see in our time though it was bob tail trucks and loaders, load them with mules.

**JG:** Was it mostly pulpwood y'all were loading?

**CM:** Long logs too. They would load them on those trucks. It was funny how you talk about evolution. That surely would have to be considered an evolvment because it's where today it is nothing but 18 wheelers and it was nothing then but bob tail trucks and dangerous, oh so much danger there. It was rough hard work.

**WH:** Yes, I can remember the tail end of that because like I said I'm ten years younger than them so I can remember them hauling on the short trucks. You would see somebody's muffler like that and he would say he is a pulpwooder. Small wood they would just take and throw it up on the bed of the truck.

**CM:** But, you know, you look back on it with 20/20 is, you know, looking back but anyway all of a sudden somebody wanted to haul more you got a drag axle. You remember that?

**RD:** Yes.

**CM:** And the first thing you know you got two...well actually the drag axle doesn't touch the ground unless he's loaded, you know, and it helps him to haul more and they just get those loads higher and higher and higher. But, then you know of course, the long logs become the thing of the day on those...when did that come in? I can't remember man.

**RD:** Oh Kit Crain was hauling with a log truck.

**CM:** He had one of the first ones I remember.

**RD:** Yes, me too. I guess he was hauling with them in the sixties probably, and in the fifties. He was hauling in the fifties. He had a log truck with a trailer. He sure did, yes.

**CM:** They had an old boy from over on the other side of the river, what we were talking about awhile ago in Polk County at Camden that was an Indian and he never had a dent in his truck and he was always so slow and precise. One day I remember that some of them was bragging about the old fellow about how his truck was just like a new truck all the time. But, I remember he said he said "I take no chance." He couldn't say chance; he said it like an Indian, chance he said. It wasn't two months he got killed. He got a log on him. That was a dangerous thing man.

**RD:** It sure was. Were there any mills in there around Saron?

**CM:** Yes, Carl Walker had a mill.

**WH:** Matt Boykin had a mill.

**CM:** Yes, Matt Boykin had a mill and different ones.

**JG:** Are these like ground hog mills or the portable mills or stationary mills?

**RD:** Peckerwood mills. They were stationary but you could pick it up and move it pretty quick.

**CM:** Yes, they were stationary but still on a small scale, you know, and also dangerous boy.

**RD:** Yes.

**WH:** That is how Nap built his house. He went down and pulled all the cypress that he could find out of the Neches River.

**RD:** Yes, sinkers, yes.

**CM:** Yes, a lot of people don't know that is a cypress house.

**WH:** He made boards out of it and built it.

**JG:** Well fellows I sure appreciate it. I think we've been going for a couple of hours now.

**CM:** If you really want to know something asks Burlon and Charles.

**JG:** Havard?

**CM:** Yes.

**RD:** They would be good interviews, they sure would.

**WH:** Burlon would be real good and Lynwood might be. (laughter)

**RD:** You couldn't believe Lynwood though.

**CM:** They would whoop you and me both whenever they saw us. We would have to fight Dick.

**WH:** I would have to be here for that interview. Lynwood Dykes, Joe Dykes son.

**RD:** Yes, I know Lynwood. (laughter)

**CM:** He knows Lynwood well.

**WH:** Well Lynwood and Burlon and Peewee would be good.

**JG:** All right I'll go ahead and stop this now and again thank y'all.

**CM:** Thank you.

**END OF INTERVIEW**