

CHARLES A. HAVARD

Interview 253a

June 28, 2012, at The History Center, Diboll, Texas

Jonathan Gerland, Interviewer

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ABSTRACT: In this interview with Jonathan Gerland and Richard Donovan, southern Angelina County native Charles Havard reminisces about growing up in the Huntington/Zavalla/Saron/Bellview area of the county in the middle 20th century. He talks about growing up in a rural area, where his family depended on fishing, hog raising, hunting, growing cotton, and harvesting timber for subsistence and didn't get electricity in their home until he was almost out of high school. Mr. Havard talks about attending school in Shawnee Prairie, Bald Hill, and Zavalla, fishing the Neches river, hunting squirrels, rounding up hogs, helping his father harvest timber, picking cotton, and making lye soap. He also discusses social events like church services, brush arbor revival services, and cemetery workings. He tells about joining the U.S. Army in 1953 and then working various construction jobs throughout the state as a welder before retiring in Angelina County.

Jonathan Gerland (hereafter JG): Today's date is June 28, 2012. My name is Jonathan Gerland. Today I'm with Charles A. Havard and Richard Donovan. We are at the History Center in Diboll and we are going to do an oral history interview with Mr. Havard. If we could Mr. Havard we will begin if you will just state when and where you were born.

Charles A. Havard (hereafter CH): I was born in Lufkin, Texas, June 20, 1935.

JG: 1935 and where was your family living at the time?

CH: I believe they was living at Manning.

JG: At Manning, okay.

CH: I think so.

JG: Did your father work for the lumber company there?

CH: No, he farmed and worked for himself.

JG: Okay, I guess the mill had just about shut down by then, '35 I think is when it burned or somewhere about that time.

CH: I don't know.

JG: Who were your parents?

CH: Travis Havard and Annie Weaver Havard.

JG: The Weavers, okay. So, we are familiar a little bit with the Weaver and Havard's in that part of the country.

CH: Right, I'm half and half.

JG: Half and half. (laughter) You were telling me a little bit earlier about growing up in the Bellview area. I thought we would just start with going to school and things. Where did you start attending school?

CH: I started school at Shawnee Prairie.

JG: Shawnee Prairie, okay.

CH: I believe I finished the first grade at Shawnee Prairie and we moved over here to Renfro Prairie and I went to Bald Hill for about a half a year. Then we moved to Bellview and I started to school at Zavalla in the second grade. (**JG:** Okay.) I finished at Zavalla in '53.

JG: Okay, you were telling me a little bit about growing up at Shawnee Prairie.

CH: Well, I was talking about those long leaf forests and people probably won't visualize those trees how tall and big they were in the woods. The forest was clean. You could ride a horse down through the woods, which you can't do now.

JG: So, it was open pine forests, just a high canopy.

CH: Yes, right. It's something you won't ever forget if you see it. Of course I haven't ever saw the big timber out in California out in there, but I saw that here.

JG: Any experiences of going to school during that time you want to share?

CH: Well we had old wood heaters and you burn up on one side and froze on the other one.

JG: What did a school day consist of? Did you have recreation time?

CH: I believe we had a fifteen minute recess in the mornings and fifteen in the evenings didn't we Dick?

Richard Donovan (hereafter RD): Something like that.

CH: We had a period that they would let you play baseball or softball if you had a ball and bat. If we lost the ball we were just out of luck.

RD: Jonathan we had a game at that time called deer and dog.

JG: Deer and dog?

RD: Yes. You remember it?

CH: Go ahead.

RD: You remember it?

CH: I vaguely remember it. Maybe it will come back when you tell it.

RD: Its' where all the boys were deer to start with and you would have one dog that was out in the middle of the open field...

JG: Another boy?

RD: Yes, another boy and you had a base on each side of the field and the objective was for all the deer to be able to move and they had to move periodically from one base to the other base and go through the open field and then the dog pursued them. And, if the dog touched you, you became the dog. So, it was quit strenuous and rugged. I remember a guy named Tommy Noel that got his leg broken in a game of it.

CH: Oh yes, I remember that.

JG: Now where was that? Was that when y'all were going to Zavalla School?

RD: Yes.

CH: Grade school there at Zavalla, the old school.

RD: They wouldn't let you dare play that today that would be off limits. There was a cocklebur or a grass burr patch on the extremity of the area we played in and it had as I recall it, those purple pointed grass burrs.

CH: Oh, those were bad!

RD: The kids from right in there from where Charlie was from named Junior Havard could take off and run in them grass burrs, everybody was barefoot, and Junior could run in that grass burr patch and nobody could catch him.

CH: Nobody could catch him.

RD: No.

CH: He was pretty tough.

JG: Well talk a little bit now about going to Zavalla School. That was when you were in the second grade I guess. Do you remember anything specific about Zavalla, anything you can share?

CH: It was a big city to me then. We, like I say, we played a period in the morning and a period in the evening and everybody carried their lunch.

JG: How far away did you live from school there in Zavalla?

CH: Seventeen miles.

JG: Seventeen miles! How did you get to school?

CH: They had an old long school bus that had wooden benches that went down through the center of it, back to back, and then one on each side. It would hold about 60 or 70 kids. The kids started setting up front as the big ones got on they would just shove you back. If you wound up on the end down there you got mashed pretty good. It was something else. There was two communities rode that bus. It was the Bellview bunch and the Saron bunch and naturally they didn't get along too good.

JG: So those were the old school districts then, the Bellview and the Saron district and then y'all were consolidated into Zavalla I guess.

CH: Right.

JG: Why didn't the two districts get along? Ever thought about that?

CH: I don't know that was just...

JG: That is just the way it was huh?

CH: ...one of those big boys would tell a little one to go hit that guy. "Well I can't do it." He would say you want me to whip you or you want him to whoop you? And, you'd go hit him and that would get the fight started, you see. This guy would go take up for the little guy. They was all time doing something like that, the Harris's.

JG: What about the Donovan's? (laughter)

CH: Well Donovan lived over on the highway.

JG: Oh okay, he was a city boy.

CH: Yes. The only time I ever saw him was at school except when he started going to the river.

RD: And the roads in and out of where he lived were not desirable.

CH: No, sometimes it got to where a tractor couldn't even get up the hill. They were bad.

JG: So, that just meant you didn't go to school that day huh?

CH: That is right. But, most of the time some way or another everybody got that school bus through. They would leave early in the evening sometimes going back home too.

JG: Do you remember who the bus driver or drivers were? Anything stand out?

CH: Flint Weaver drove the first one I rode, Burgan Modisette drove and Buster Page drove and my brother Travis Havard and Earnest Crain drove and Jimmy Sam Modisette drove and then myself and Sammy Ruth Palmer drove.

JG: So, you yourself as you got older drove?

CH: My last year in school I drove.

JG: So, you were going to school and driving the bus?

CH: Right.

JG: Okay.

CH: One time it came a big flood and it washed out over there in the Shawnee Creek bottom and they had boards up for the old bus to run off the end of the bridge and it fell in there.

JG: Was that when you were driving or just a passenger?

CH: No that is when I was just a kid. We was just talking about how bad the roads was they didn't fix it like today they would fix that today, then it probably took a month to get it fixed. It was just kind of a backward...well I won't say backward, they just took their time fixing the roads back then. They didn't spend a whole lot of money.

JG: This would have been in the forties during the war or just after or both?

CH: It was probably long about then the war was still going on. Then they separated the people moved out and they separated the Bellview district from the Saron district on the buses. We got a small bus and they got new commissioners and things like that and the roads gradually got better. When Will Evangeline got elected commissioner he built roads. And today some of that is still his roads.

JG: Willie Vandalion?

RD: Yes.

JG: You wouldn't by any chance know how to spell that would you?

RD: It's E-v-a-n-g-l-i-n-e but that is probably not right Jonathan.

JG: Okay that will get us close.

CH: He lived at Manning and he started the good roads down there.

JG: What year did you graduate?

CH: '53.

JG: You graduated Zavalla High School in 1953. Did you play any organized sports teams?

CH: No, I didn't. I had more fun going to the games than I did playing.

JG: Were you able to attend quite a few games?

CH: Nearly every one of them yes, after I got up teenager.

JG: What sports did you enjoy?

CH: Mostly we had basketball. That was about all we had.

RD: That is right.

JG: Did you travel some and watch the games at other schools?

CH: Some, we did that some.

JG: Did you ever drive the bus by any chance when you would go to the games?

CH: Oh yes, I would carry the bus to the games at Zavalla my senior year when I was driving, which was okay with the superintendent.

JG: Okay, so you carried other people from the community to the games?

CH: Yes, anybody that wanted to ride could ride – grownups or whatever.

JG: Tell a little bit about just growing up during that time. What did you do when you weren't going to school?

CH: Fish and hunt!

JG: Fishing and hunting.

CH: Fish and hunt or either work in the fields one, you might have to chop cotton.

JG: Let's talk about working in the fields first.

CH: Oh lord! That chopping cotton was bad now. That is a slow go and then...

JG: Describe what you would have to do because I think most people today don't know what you are talking about.

CH: What chopping cotton?

JG: Yes.

CH: Well they planted it real thick in a row and then when you thinned it out, what they call chopping cotton, you thinned out say the width of a hoe. Then later on after it grew up again they would send you back down there you hoed that cotton and get some more grass out of it and then they plowed it and it grew up and you had to pick it. Which, that was a bad job to me because I never could get no weight in that sack.

JG: Now is this cotton on your family's land or were you hired out for other people?

CH: It was on family land and I hired out two days on Shawnee Prairie to chop cotton for fifty cents an hour, twelve hours a day. I knew it was a mistake when I'd been there for about an hour or two but I couldn't quit because Daddy would have sent me back. I had to stay with it.

JG: You did two days you said?

CH: Two days to finish that field and I never will forget that! (laughter) Every time I would start to lean on that hoe the man I was working for would say (clear his throat) that was Preacher Jones up there at Shawnee Prairie, Dick. I don't know whether you knew him or not. That was Jo Nell Jones's uncle.

RD: Okay.

CH: He was a brother to...

RD: Sewell.

CH: Yes.

JG: How many other people were working those two days you worked?

CH: It was about eight or ten of us, probably about that many.

JG: So you were still living at home then as a child?

CH: Oh yes, I had grown up to twelve or thirteen years old, something like that.

JG: What about around your own home what type of work did you do? Did y'all have chickens and...

CH: We had chickens, hogs, horses and cows and dogs. Well, I had my chores in the evenings, you'd feed the horses and all that. That was our job, you know.

RD: Milked.

CH: No, Mama milked.

JG: What did y'all use the horses for?

CH: Plow the fields.

JG: Plow the fields.

CH: Yes, Daddy got a tractor after we all left home and you plow that field all day long is a pretty good job too. I missed most of that hard plowing because I was a little bit younger.

JG: So, you used horses and not mules?

CH: Yes, well I mean Daddy liked horses and maybe the neighbor over there liked mules but, they... a horse seemed to me like minds better. A mule they always said would take care of itself you wasn't going to work that mule to death.

JG: So, the hogs you had did you have them penned in or out?

CH: No, we run them in the woods then and ever so often you would have to mark and castrate the boar hogs.

JG: What was your mark?

CH: On the ears.

JG: What was your family's mark? Do you remember?

CH: Swallow fork in the left and two swallow forks in the right.

JG: Okay, say that again.

CH: Swallow fork in the left and two swallow forks in the right. It's just like a v in the left and a w in the right is kind of about as good as I can describe it.

JG: Okay. Is that something you registered at the courthouse?

CH: Yes, Daddy had that registered just like a brand. Those hogs back then, they ran in bunches. They run up to fifty-five or sixty head in a bunch and they would always run in a certain area and Daddy had his hog dogs and he would go in the woods two or three times a week to check them hogs. He run hogs instead of cattle then. He liked hogs and he had two hog dogs he run with them. I went with him several times after I got big enough to keep up.

JG: So how far away from where your house was did you have to go to round the hogs up?

CH: Two or three miles. We lived about a mile from the river up in the piney woods part and those hogs, most of them, run the river bottom on both sides of the river. We had some pens in the woods also.

JG: How often would you go out and mark them, every year?

CH: As soon as the pigs got big enough to catch?

JG: Did you ever, in rounding them up, did you ever round up pigs that were already marked by somebody else?

CH: Sometimes. Most of the times if there was very few...sometimes a bigger hog would come to your bunch, but most of the times your bunch was what you called segregated from the other bunch. If they was a bunch of pigs in there marked with somebody else's mark they marked the wrong pig.

JG: So, what did you do then?

CH: I guess you had a friendly chat. I heard Daddy asked a man how come he marked his hog one time and he said, "I didn't mark it." And he said, "yes you did" and he told him about it and he said, "yes, I did" and that is all I know happened about it. But, people were pretty honest about that. There was a few that...

JG: So who owned the land that the hogs ran on?

CH: Carter.

JG: Carter.

CH: Carter Lumber Company.

JG: Did y'all have to do any kind of arrangements with them or was it just?

CH: Back then you didn't, it was just open range for hogs and cattle you just turn them loose.

JG: Did you ever get to know any people from the lumber company? Did they have pasture riders or anything that you knew of?

CH: I knew Needham Williford, I met him. He was there timber man in our area. He was a surveyor and if you wanted to lease some land or something that was the man you went to.

JG: What would you lease the land for?

CH: Hunting and grazing.

RD: That was in later years though.

JG: This was what '40's or '50's?

RD: In the 50's probably.

CH: Yes, but in the 40's there was very few pastures. There was a few but...let's see...

RD: There is one across the river, the Barnes.

CH: The Barnes pasture; that was there always I guess.

RD: Yes.

CH: Then you had John Weaver had one for years and most of them around where we were at was just fenced for cattle and you didn't pay the fence no mind. We didn't! Kids went where they wanted to, you know.

JG: Talk now about more along those lines of kids going where you want to. You had told me anytime y'all had a mind to go to the river you would just go to the river.

CH: We would go to the river and go swimming. Sometimes you carry you a fishing pole and a skillet and a few biscuits or something with you. Nine times out of ten you wouldn't do no fishing you would do all swimming. Me and one old boy we carried us a skillet and everything down there one time and we was going to catch our dinner and we forgot our grease. We just boiled that fish in the skillet.

JG: Boiled it in the river water.

CH: That river water made the best coffee in the world back then. But, later on in years you don't drink it no more or use it for anything.

JG: Did y'all have any names to your swimming holes or?

CH: Well we went to the Robins Camp.

JG: Robins camp.

CH: And, we would go up to what they called Wash Out Bend and then we would go to the Weaver log landing. They had a baptizing hole they called it, on up above that where all that Crain Settlement and Bellview and all of them used to baptize up there.

JG: Okay, so these are all places you could have swam regardless of water level?

CH: No, high water was...

JG: You didn't swim then huh.

CH: Well we did but it wasn't very safe. I wouldn't do it now or I wouldn't advise any kids to do it. Dick can tell you that. When the old river got high it was pretty rough. But, we would go down there when we were kids a lot and we would have to swim to get to the river. Then when we got to the river we would have the banks and we would swim in that high water. I don't know, we never thought about getting drowned or anything.

JG: So, the river was so high it was out of its banks then and y'all would have to wade to swim.

CH: Oh a lot of times it was and the old sloughs out there we'd have to swim across them. Of course we would go down there and we would stay a half a day or a day if we wasn't working in the fields and we would squirrel hunt in the summer.

JG: Now Mr. Donovan liked to squirrel hunt with a twenty-two. Did you use a twenty-two or a shotgun?

CH: I used a twenty-two, but of course a lot of times I used up a lot of shells too. But I always hunted with a squirrel dog. Daddy always had a good squirrel dog and I would take him and go up and down them creeks and that was good squirrel hunting. Daddy and my other brothers they would hunt in the river bottom with a shotgun you know, still hunt they called it. They'd hunt them cat squirrels. I never was good at that. I wasn't fast enough.

JG: Was there ever any ducks? Did you do any duck hunting?

CH: Well I tried but, there was a lot of ducks down there then, big old green heads but, I never killed a duck 'till I was forty years old. Them ducks was smarter than I was, but we killed a few deer.

RD: Very few, there weren't very many.

CH: No, there wasn't too many but the deer, that was like beef back then to people who lived out in the country. If they killed a deer they eat it all. They stewed and canned and they didn't lose no meat. They were conservative with it and they didn't kill them just for sport like a lot of people do now.

JG: It wasn't sport hunting it was subsistence hunting.

CH: No, it was that and we fished and we fished.

JG: Tell about fishing.

CH: Well, we fished with trot lines and throw lines and wire nets back then. There was a few thread nets but not too many people had them because you would go out there and build them wire nets back then they was 8 foot long and 4 foot in diameter.

JG: So these are hoops?

CH: They made the hoops out of grapevines and then they would cut the little saplings for...put four of them on there and that would hold it together and they would wrap that chicken wire around it. You would catch a few catfish but mostly drum and buffalo.

RD: It was highly illegal too. We didn't know it, we didn't know it.

CH: We didn't care did we? (laughing) I remember back then that if the game warden was going to come drag the river it seemed like somebody would send Daddy word. I got off the school bus one time and the school bus driver told me, said, "Tell Travis the game warden is coming down the river Wednesday." He sold those fish see, in the spring he sold fish.

JG: Where would he sell them?

CH: In Lufkin. We had an old A-model and he would put them in it and peddle them out there.

JG: Sell them to some of the grocery stores and things or?

CH: Not unless they caught a real big fish but they sold a lot of those scale fish out in the colored sections.

JG: Just went there and sold them to whoever?

CH: Yes, he went every Wednesday and Saturday.

JG: Wednesday's and Saturday's.

CH: Yes, and they would know when he was coming. He had a route he went.

JG: You said scale fish, carp.

CH: They liked them buffalo and drum. I call them drum.

JG: What did y'all do with the catfish?

CH: We sold them too. Catfish was easier to sell than drum was. Those people didn't like catfish 'cause they say they a scavenger, you know, and they don't like that, but the café's the same. If we caught a big catfish they would buy them.

JG: Even there in Zavalla?

CH: I don't know whether they would in Zavalla or not.

RD: I sold some.

CH: You did.

JG: Did y'all clean them and sell them?

CH: If it was a big fish you'd clean it but the others you sold whole, you know.

JG: What about trying to keep them cool was there any effort for that?

CH: Well you would put sweet gum limbs on them, you know, little tops from sweet gums on them and then, at Manning up there at what they called the cut off...I believe that is what they called it.

RD: The Manning cut off.

CH: Yes, there was a little old store there and Daddy would get ice there sometimes and spread it, throw in there, chip it up and throw it in there under them leaves and that would hold them. Them drum buffalo would die pretty quick anyways, but they won't spoil before you get them.

JG: So they were in buckets or pails?

CH: No just spread them out.

JG: In what in a pickup truck?

CH: In back of that old A-model.

JG: Oh in back of the car.

CH: It had an old...

JG: Rumble seat?

CH: Yes.

JG: Oh okay.

RD: Back in those days the ice company in Lufkin ran a route down through there and left ice at Huntington and that Manning cutoff and went on down to Zavalla and Zavalla had a pretty big ice house there.

JG: Did they make ice there?

RD: No it came from Lufkin down there.

JG: It all had to be delivered from Lufkin.

RD: Yes, and I remember old man...his name escapes me right now, but he was a one armed man and he had a horse and wagon and they would load that ice into that wagon and he would drive all over Zavalla and he'd sell twenty-five pounds here and fifty pounds there, that sort of thing.

JG: So it's block ice?

RD: Yes.

JG: How would they cut the ice?

RD: With an ice pick. The ice was already scored. It came out of the ice house scored and you had a little sign you hung, in later years, you had a little blue square sign about 12 or 14 inches and it had 25, 50, 100 here and 150 over here and whatever you wanted you rotated that sign to that. It was just a nail in the wall, nailed to the wall and you rotated that sign and what you wanted was upright. If you wanted a 25 pound block that day you twisted it and people had quote unquote ice boxes in those days. He would come out of there with those tongs and grab that piece of ice. The kids would always try to be present because when he chipped that thing...

CH: You would get them chips.

RD: ...splinters went flying all over everything, you know, and he didn't like that. Anyway, that is the way ice was dispensed in those days.

JG: How would the big block of ice come in the delivery truck? Was it insulated in anyway?

CH: They had a kind of a, some of them had a tarpaulin they put over it and they had sideboards on the old truck.

JG: Did they use sawdust for anything?

RD: Yes, ice houses were laced with sawdust.

CH: Yes, sawdust and everything. Our first icebox was a wooden chest. The walls in it were thick and it opened from the top. Then they came out with those upright ones. They was fancy.

JG: Store bought ones huh?

CH: Yes, and then they come out with ones that look like a refrigerator you get now but, it was still an icebox. Ice went in the top up there. The first automatic icebox we had was a kerosene one. It had a kerosene burner underneath and that is the way it made the ice.

JG: When did y'all get electricity?

CH: When I was in the eleventh grade.

JG: Eleventh grade. Now ya'll had electricity Mr. Donovan before then?

RD: I always had electricity although it was highly unreliable the first four or five years of my life. It just...

JG: That is because you lived closer to Zavalla.

RD: Yes.

JG: Right on the railroad tracks?

RD: Yes.

JG: But you didn't get it until the eleventh grade?

CH: Eleventh grade, yes.

JG: Do you remember the first time you saw electricity, or electric light or anything electric powered?

CH: I guess the school.

JG: The school. Do you remember that?

CH: I just remember it served up a very good light.

JG: So, it was light then the first time you saw electricity.

CH: Yes, we used kerosene lamps is what we used. We lived in that old log house down there in Weavers Bend and at one time it had a carbide system for lights. They had sold my granddaddy...I never did see that work but it had a spot light that big around on the front porch where you could turn it on and shine out through the field or whatever. But, that is where I was living when we got electricity, was in the old log house.

JG: It was after the war then?

CH: Yes.

RD: Carbide tank sat outside the house and they mixed water with it and the little pipes went into all the light fixtures in the house and you lit it just like you lit your lanterns.

JG: So, what did y'all think about electricity?

CH: Oh I loved it! (laughter) You got that icebox and all that good stuff then. We was up town man.

JG: So, you bought an electric icebox and maybe fans. Did you get some electric fans or anything?

CH: I think they probably had one. We never did...hot and cold back then I don't know you never did think about it. If it was hot you might not go to bed until about ten or eleven o'clock until it cooled off, but all the windows in a house was down low where it would blow over your bed in there. Now they build them up higher, you know.

JG: Yes, you had high ceilings in your house too to help too probably.

CH: Well that old house didn't. It did at one time then they put a ceiling in it and it was about an 8 foot ceiling then. At one time it was just one great big room, but those logs were about 12 inches in diameter split in half. That is what the whole house was built out of. The seals were about 12x12 square, they hewed those and the fireplace, which was about 8 foot wide but they had where they could walk, they cooked in it and used it for heat also when it was built. But, my granddaddy and them went in there and walled the sides in with mud and rock and made it about 4 foot wide then and that is what we used for heat. Like I said you freeze on one side and burn up on the other.

RD: Which house was that Charlie?

CH: That was the old log house we lived down there at Weaver's Bend.

RD: Did it burn?

CH: Yes, it burned.

RD: Okay.

JG: Who built that house? Was it an ancestor?

CH: Yes.

JG: One of the Weaver's or the Havard's?

CH: The Weaver's.

JG: So from your mother's family then?

CH: Yes.

JG: Do you remember who or what Weaver's might have lived there?

CH: No, Eli lived there. I don't know who lived there before he did.

JG: Eli Weaver?

CH: Yes, but Larkin Weaver was his daddy and he is the one that settled Weaver's Bend.

JG: How many Weaver's and Havard's were there down there, families? Do you recall a rough number?

CH: No, I don't. That would just be hard to say because I'd leave out some of them that lived down there in one of them pig trails off back there just a little trail.

JG: But everybody was more or less related?

CH: Pretty much, pretty much.

RD: I believe a Lufkin doctor owned that old house when it burned is that not right?

CH: Yes, Dr. Shepherd, Dr. Shepherd. Momma and Daddy sold out to Red, what used to be the VA (Veterans Administration) officer in Lufkin, they sold it to him and Mr. Shands that owned the insurance agency and later they sold it to Dr. Shepherd. They claimed lightning struck it and it burned. Dr. Shepherd's folks still own that place. It was 72 acres I believe.

JG: That your family owned?

CH: Yes.

JG: How much of that did you have under cultivation?

CH: About 30 or 35 acres.

JG: About half of it then. The rest of it was?

CH: Timber.

JG: Timber, did y'all do anything to encourage timber growth or do you remember any cuts during your time?

CH: Oh they cut the timber periodically but they wouldn't cut very small, because you know, you just didn't cut the small timber then. I know when Temple, it was Southern Pine then, bought it one time from Grandpa it was from 8 inches up with a five year option to get it off so all them 8 inch ones was 10 by then.

JG: Within five years.

CH: Yes, I guess that is the way you make money.

JG: All the logging by that time was done, well how was the logging done?

CH: With mules, with trucks and mules. I did see some logging down there on wagons though. Minyard Cryer and now Ab Boykin put a sawmill down there one time and they logged it with the people that hauled them logs in there with a wagon. Mr. Modisette had the prettiest team of mules you ever saw.

JG: It was eight wheeled wagons?

CH: No it was 4 wheeled wagons with tires on it just like on a car.

JG: Oh okay, rubber tires then.

CH: Yes, his was anyway and I saw him carry a load in there one time, I was a pretty small kid at the time.

RD: Charlie you probably logged some did you not? I know Travis did.

CH: I helped Daddy log. We logged with a team and a truck.

JG: How did you cut the trees?

CH: A cross cut saw.

JG: Were you pretty good on the end of a cross cut saw?

CH: If I didn't ride it too much.

JG: Were you always with somebody bigger or smaller than yourself?

CH: It was always somebody bigger. If you rode that saw Daddy would get you pretty quick. I would go help him cut a load and then help him get it out.

JG: How far down did y'all cut them?

CH: Oh we cut them about a foot off the ground.

JG: A foot off the ground. That was pretty low. You had to stoop pretty good.

CH: Yes, you was always humped over pretty good. But, now that river bottom I wanted to tell you about. When I was a kid it had those oaks...

JG: He is holding his hands out as far as he can stretch them.

CH: ...as far as I can reach, that is right, they would put one of them on a truck, on a truck and trailer.

JG: One log of the trunk of the tree.

CH: I seen several of them go out there at the Robin's camp with one log on that trailer. They was carrying it to the track.

JG: To the railroad tracks?

CH: Yes.

JG: Which tracks would that have been?

CH: Carter's.

JG: To the Carter's tram road, okay. Was that across the river or on this side?

CH: No, it was on this side.

JG: Okay, so they were still using that tram road that went across the river.

CH: Well they built it back when we was kids. We had that small school bus then and because we would come in the evening a lot of times and we would come down that hill there where you went to that old William Penn Cemetery. We would come down that hill and the train would be across the road, you know.

JG: Was it a steam engine?

CH: Yes, and they fired them with a pine knot.

JG: Describe that, the steam locomotive, the train and all that.

CH: Well it didn't look a whole lot different from your later years but behind it had a gondola full of pine knots and they had them piled up periodically beside the tracks and I never was up close when they were, you know.

JG: You never knew any train crews or anything like that?

CH: Oh yes, I knew Lee Outlaw. He was the engineer.

RD: Really, I didn't know that.

CH: Yes, Lee was engineer on one of them trains.

JG: What about Amerine? Did you know anybody named Amerine?

CH: No I didn't.

JG: Or Morrison?

CH: No.

JG: William J. Morrison?

CH: We didn't go too much. You can imagine back then living out that far you didn't see too many people and Lee was a personal friend of the family anyway, but if he was across the track we would get him to blow that train whistle. You could hear it. He could blow an old lonesome whistle now.

RD: Jonathan what you got to recognize is that he lived as remote as just about anybody that I ever knew.

CH: We was the last house.

RD: He lived in the last house in Weaver Bend and it was a long way back there.

CH: Yes, like I say we squirrel hunted year round when I was a kid. Of course we carried the squirrels to the house if you killed one too. You skinned him and dressed him out and made dumplings with him or fried him if he was tender and things like that.

JG: Talk a little more about your time on the river fishing and stuff. Did y'all use boats any?

CH: Yes, if anybody had one down there we would use it.

JG: Did it have a motor on it?

CH: No, we didn't have no motors, when I was a kid we didn't have no motors. I remember the first motor Daddy got. It was what they called a Kettle, K-e-t-t-l-e, and the shaft stuck out behind it like that.

JG: More horizontal than vertical.

CH: Yes, it was back there like that and the old propeller was that big around.

JG: Looks like he's holding close to a foot, twelve inch diameter.

CH: Yes, and it would run about a mile an hour or two miles an hour. It run off of a coil, a t-model coil and telephone batteries is what we used on it. That is the way magneta style.

JG: So, it was electric power or gasoline?

CH: Gasoline.

JG: Gasoline, okay.

CH: We used that thing, we paddled for years, you know, and he bought that thing from somebody.

JG: What were the boats made out of?

CH: Cypress and pine.

JG: Homemade? Did y'all make them?

CH: Yes, Daddy made his own boat.

JG: Made your own boat. Would it be sawn boards or carved out?

CH: No, it would be most of the time twelve inch boards and if you get a wider board you made the sides out of as wide as you could get.

JG: How did you seal it, seal where the boards would come together?

CH: Well some people used tar, asphalt, melt that asphalt and pour in there. But, if you were a real good wood carver or some of them could pretty well seal them together.

JG: The joints?

CH: Yes.

RD: You could sink that old cypress in the water and just submerge it and it would seal itself.

CH: That was...them boats wasn't the best boats in the world. The last one Daddy had was real good. A man by the name of Mr. Fuller made it for him and he made it out of cypress and it had the high sides on it and it was made for a motor and he had a little 5 horse motor he got to go on it. He threwed that little Kettle motor in a corner out there where he throwed his junk and about 20 years later a guy came by and saw it and he gave daddy \$15 for it. There is no telling what it was worth.

RD: That is right.

JG: Where did he get the motor, your dad?

CH: I don't know. I never saw but two of them, Charlie Havard had one and then Daddy got that one.

JG: Now your name is Charlie Havard also.

CH: No, Charles.

JG: Charles, okay.

CH: Charlie was a cousin of Daddy's. He lived in Bellview too. He fished with those thread nets.

JG: Any particular outings on the river or eventful memorable occasions on the river, fishing or swimming?

CH: Well when we were kids we went down there in Loggins Creek and when it would flood that creek cut out a big bank over here and it was about 10 or 12 foot high that bank was. That was our swimming hole and we decided we would dig us a cave and every time it rained we would be down there swimming and we would dig us a cave to get in the dry. And, there was me, my brother, and two or three more people and we had that cave dug pretty good and that thing caved in on us and it got everybody but me. And, I got my brother out and then we got another guy out and he run for help and we had that other boy out. We had him uncovered from the waist up when the whole community come down. We was over there naked, we had to swim across that big old hole to get across the other side.

RD: That was a close call.

CH: Yes, it was close.

JG: How old were you then?

CH: Oh, seven or eight years old, I guess. Bryant and Jimmy Sam was still going to school and that was about the closest call I ever had down there. Then we moved on up to Weavers Bend about the same year.

JG: Do you remember the cave there near Fort Teran on the Tyler county side?

CH: I never been to that.

JG: Never been there. Did you hear about it when you were a kid?

CH: Oh yes, I heard about it. There was supposed to be a lead cave over there somewhere. You heard of that Dick?

RD: It was at the mouth of Shawnee Creek.

CH: Did you ever find it?

RD: Well Jonathan and I have been there. We didn't find any lead but we've been there.

CH: Found the old cave huh?

RD: Where it supposedly used to mine it. I'm going back to, that is where Hubert Cryer said it was.

JG: Growing up in Shawnee Prairie and that area did you ever hear any stories about the Indians that might have lived in the area? Even if not anything specific any legends or about the Shawnee Indians themselves?

CH: No I haven't, never did.

JG: Did you know the Flournoy's growing up down there?

CH: Oh yes.

JG: Okay.

CH: I knew, well I started to school with Pete. I went to school with him one year. We were about the same age, of course everybody knew Mr. Flournoy.

RD: Peddled in his store some too.

CH: Oh yes, he would carry you on the book, you know.

JG: Give you credit?

CH: Oh yes, everybody that lived up and down the river traded on the credit.

JG: With Mr. Flournoy?

CH: Him or somebody.

RD: Aaron Barge.

CH: Him or Aaron Barge at Zavalla.

JG: What all would you get at Mr. Flournoy's store?

CH: Just the necessary things, staples you know. You didn't buy no candy and soda waters. (laughing)

JG: No toys for the kids?

CH: No, you didn't buy toys and stuff. You made your own back then. Then when they sold the cotton and things they would pay the bill.

JG: So cotton was again the cash crop.

CH: The money crop.

JG: That is what you got paid money for and the other crops were for your own eating, trading I guess.

CH: Well yes, you raised your corn, you fed your stock and made meal and peas and things like that you ate and canned. You had to can it because you didn't have no deep freeze back then.

JG: Talk a little bit more about your diet. What did y'all eat and drink back then?

CH: Well we ate peas and everything you grow on a farm, we eat and we eat a lot of deer meat, squirrel and chicken.

JG: What about, what did you drink?

CH: Water and tea.

JG: Water and tea. Did you have tea all the time or just certain meals?

CH: Tea all the time or tea was a special drink.

JG: Did you have it every evening for supper?

CH: No, we had milk. We drank a lot of milk.

JG: When did you drink the milk?

CH: Any meal, we had plenty of milk. We kept the milk in the well.

JG: To keep it cool?

CH: To keep it cool, I thought that was cold milk.

JG: What about butter did you have butter?

CH: Oh yes, we had plenty of butter. We churned our own butter.

JG: Churned your own butter. Did you have plenty of sugar?

CH: Oh yes.

JG: Sugar, and meal and salt?

CH: Sugar and meal and flour was cheap back then. We bought flour in like 25 pound bags and sometimes I've seen Daddy get a 50 pound bag. You didn't buy small bags of stuff.

JG: What about hunting? Talk a little bit about hunting practices and things back then.

CH: Well...

JG: You mentioned deer, deer was a meat that was as common as maybe beef is today.

CH: ...there was a lot of coon hunting going on. That was for sport mostly.

JG: Coon hunting was for sport.

CH: Yes, but of course you had a coon on the table at Christmas with baked potatoes around it. (laughter) That was one of my dad's specialties. He had to have that coon.

JG: For Christmas?

CH: Yes, momma would fix it for him. It was pretty good eating, kind of like pork, but I don't care for it now. I had enough of it.

JG: So, y'all had chickens and I guess that was mainly for the eggs right?

CH: Yes, we had chickens for the eggs and then you ate chicken periodically, on Sunday mostly.

RD: Did you lock your chickens up at night Charlie?

CH: No, they mostly roosted in trees and they...dogs kept the varmints away pretty much, you know, and...

JG: Talk a little bit about your dogs. You mentioned them earlier that your dad always had hunting dogs.

CH: He had good dogs, good hog dogs and it is amazing as far as that dog could hear him or see him if he wanted them to take them hogs this a way he could holler at him and wave his arm and them dogs would turn them hogs. One dog he called a drive dog and that dog would lead and the other one would keep them rounded up. When he had a bunch of hogs like I was talking about, (**JG:** Yes sir.) in particular, I told Dick about this, I went with him one time and we rounded up a bunch across the river and those dogs carried them up to the river and they didn't go in the first time. He had them to call them out and the hogs settled down and he told them to get 'em going. I don't remember the exact words he used but that dog enticed one of them old sows to follow him and when she hit the water all the rest of them followed her and there were 55 head and we carried them a mile up to the house and we didn't lose a hog.

RD: The way he enticed them though was not by persuasion, well it was by persuasion but it was not willingly, it was they...

CH: Yes, that dog would nip that old sow, you know, in the face and get her to fighting him then she followed him right on in the river and that dog went out the other side and them hogs behind him. You tell people about those dogs now and they compare them with the dogs they have now and it is completely different. The woods are different and the dogs are different. They got to catch, they carry a dog to catch the hog with now and that is the only time they turn him loose, but most of the time we would pen the hogs. We wouldn't catch just one hog, we would pen them. Like we had a hog pen across the river where we would go over there and mark and castrate those hogs over there. And like I say you didn't just catch one hog, you penned the hogs if you was going to do that. We got our hog meat and we smoked and carried the meat, you know. That is about it on eating, peas, beans, tomatoes and onions and taters.

RD: Watermelon.

CH: Watermelon and cantaloupe.

RD: Charlie, did they have a little escape hole on the hog pen for the hog to get out of after he got the hog to chase them into the pen or how did he get out?

JG: You mean the dog to get out?

RD: The dog I mean?

CH: He would jump the fence.

RD: Jump the fence.

CH: Yes, he would jump it.

JG: So, he would get the hogs mad at him, get them to follow him into the pen and then he would get out.

CH: Yes, we built wings on them pens across the river, you know, where once you got them in that deal it funneled them in.

RD: Funneled them in.

JG: Would you like some water?

CH: Yes, I'll take a swallow, thank you!

RD: Charlie did y'all ever raise any cane?

CH: No, Charles Modisette raised the cane.

JG: Sugar cane?

CH: Yes, we raised some when we lived down there by Modisette, but we didn't have a syrup mill. Mr. Modisette had a syrup mill and the whole community worked that syrup mill, mostly women and kids, you know. You got paid in syrup. That was your winter syrup and that pile of cane was stripped and trimmed to go through the... (**RD:** The chews.) crusher was big as a house, you know. I mean there was lots of sugar cane there.

RD: Did your mother use that cane to cook with any?

CH: Oh yes, make syrup cake and tea cakes, real good.

JG: How many brothers and sisters did you have?

CH: Four, I had one sister and three brothers.

JG: Where were you in the birth order?

CH: I was the last one.

JG: The youngest of all of them.

CH: Yes.

JG: So, how much older was your older sibling?

CH: Let's see, I'm 77 and she would be about 90 now.

JG: So about 12 or 13 years.

CH: Seems like she is older than that. (laughter) Something like that I guess.

RD: Travis was about 2 years older than you were.

CH: Travis is 2 years older approximately and Grover was...

JG: Grover?

CH: ...Grover, he was a couple of years older. L. T. was...he went in the army in '41 or '42. He was 18 and I guess I was about 6 so he was five years older and Anna Lee was about ten or 12.

RD: Is Grover still alive?

CH: Yes.

JG: So, you had a brother that served in World War II?

CH: Yes, he passed away though.

JG: Not in the war though did he?

CH: Yes.

JG: Oh in the war, okay.

CH: Yes, he got wounded. He was in...I believe he was in the Battle of the Bulge.

JG: The Battle of the Bulge.

CH: He had five battle stars, major battles.

JG: What was his name?

CH: L. T.

JG: L. T.

CH: That was it.

JG: It didn't stand for anything just L. T. huh?

CH: He was named after his grandfather Leroy Thomas.

JG: Leroy Thomas. So, you were old enough then to remember that when he died right?

CH: When L. T. died?

JG: When L. T. died yes.

CH: Oh L. T. died seven or eight years ago.

JG: Oh no, the fellow that died in the Battle of the Bulge.

RD: Oh no you misunderstood that, Jonathan he was just wounded.

JG: Oh okay, he didn't die during the war?

CH: No.

JG: I misunderstood, okay. Tell a little bit more about...I know you told me in later years you worked for Brown and Root and things like that, did you...and you said you moved around from job to job and were in Houston a good bit but, were you around when the coming of the lakes were occurring, say Lake Sam Rayburn, Toledo Bend? Do you remember those times? What was the feelings amongst the people where you grew up?

CH: They didn't care I don't guess, you know, that was over yonder.

RD: That was another world Jonathan.

JG: Okay, farther away then.

CH: Yes, they went over there and hauled logs out of Angelina River bottom, my brother did. But, like I say that was another world over there and they really didn't care. Now if it had been on the Neches they would have been upset.

JG: Okay, okay. I know Zavalla is not too far away from the impounded water but your world was not really even connected to Zavalla except for school.

CH: No, I went to school there and ran around in Huntington. I knew everybody in Huntington and Zavalla back then when I was kid and now I hardly know anybody. It's...you feel like a stranger when you go there. It is amazing...I don't know how many stores that were in Zavalla when we were going to school Dick, but there were several and several cafés and look at it now. You barely get gasoline on one end of town and on the other end of town and that is it. It's not much there anymore but there is a lot of people lives around. I guess special occasions they come out.

RD: Wal-Mart is too close now.

CH: Yes, Wal-Mart is too close. I hate to say that, but I go there too. One more thing, you were talking about what we used the timber for on our place, Daddy would make cross ties with a broad ax.

JG: Hand hewed cross ties.

CH: Oh yes.

JG: Did you ever help in that?

CH: I helped him cut the trees and saw them up. I never did...

JG: Cut them to length but not to hew any.

CH: I never did do none of the hewing.

JG: Why is that?

CH: I might have been too young and Daddy had to make his ties real pretty. My brother in law made ties too and...

JG: Now who was that?

CH: Jeff Curry.

JG: Curry.

CH: Yes, he made ties and whatever he figured he would sell that tie, he didn't make it pretty just, you know, hew it down real pretty.

JG: Now did a pretty tie, and we are talking about cross ties for the railroad, did a pretty tie get more money than?

CH: No, that was Jeff's theory that you was wasting your time when you took all that pain with it, but Daddy was particular about it.

JG: I guess there was basic size dimensions you shop for. A 6x8 or something like that or?

CH: A 6x8, 7x9, I forget the rest of the lengths.

JG: So, would he make them all there on your land or other peoples land?

CH: On our land.

JG: Did the railroad people come get them or did he have to haul them?

CH: You had to haul them to the track.

JG: Where would he do that?

CH: To Huntington.

JG: To Huntington, okay. So it was for the Southern Pacific or Texas & New Orleans?

CH: I guess that would be Southern Pacific.

RD: T&NO at that time.

JG: T&NO, Texas & New Orleans.

CH: They had that yard at Huntington right there where Don's garage is where that old track run across right there, the tie yard was right there.

JG: Now how many ties would he make? How many would he take in a load? Just as many as he could.

CH: Whatever was feasible for the truck to come pick up, you know.

JG: So somebody had to come. He didn't have his own truck.

CH: Daddy didn't have his own truck then but in later years...

JG: Would he borrow a truck and drive it himself or somebody would come get them.

CH: No, he generally hired somebody to come get them. My brother in law generally had a truck.

JG: So, again how many cross ties?

CH: Probably 40.

JG: About 40 would be a trip. Do you remember about what he got in pay for that?

CH: No I don't, not much.

RD: L. T. later had his own truck and everything.

CH: Yes, L. T. had his own trucks. I never did get into that.

JG: Was this something going on year round or were there certain times of year when the railroads or you just waited for the railroads?

CH: No, you could make the ties anytime, year round.

JG: So, there was always a market for them then.

CH: Right, well timber, farming, was about all they had.

JG: For cash, for money it was timber and cotton I guess and I guess fish.

CH: Yes, your livestock you know but.

JG: You said your dad delivered fish and was paid for that.

CH: Yes but sometimes that fishing got pretty crummy. I never figured that out. You remember there was two or three years there you couldn't catch no fish when we was going to have them fish fries for the school, for FFA you couldn't get no fish.

RD: Yes, well if you remember Charlie we grew up in the fifties and that terrible drought started right in there so that had a lot to do with part of that.

JG: What year did you graduate Mr. Donovan?

RD: In '54, one year after Charles.

JG: One year after Charles.

CH: You remember the big old letters on top of the school "seniors '53"? (laughter)

JG: How many people were in your graduating class?

RD: Who was the architect of that Charlie, first?

CH: Dubby Martin.

JG: What are you referring to?

CH: We painted big old letters on top of the school house "Seniors '53."

JG: What were they made of?

CH: Paint.

JG: Oh you just painted them on there, okay.

CH: They was hard to get off too. (laughter) We were pretty mischievous at school.

RD: They were!

CH: We didn't damage no property. That was as close to damaging property as you could get, but we had fun going to school.

RD: Kids were a lot rougher and tougher than they are now Charles.

CH: Yes, we would...we might go swimming for half a day and stay in swimming half a day and then go work that evening and things like that, but school was fun.

JG: What was the school year then? Nowadays they start school the last week or two of August.

CH: September, they would try to get you out in May didn't they Dick?

JG: Did they wait until after cotton picking time to go to school?

CH: No, we never was late but some people were.

RD: The Benton's particularly them boys.

CH: Yes, and Noel's.

RD: Yes.

CH: They farmed big time for Mr. Barge.

JG: So, they wouldn't come to school until after the cotton was done.

CH: Two weeks, most of the time it was two or three weeks but that was all right.

JG: I know we have some records and we are talking 100 years ago but school didn't start until September 30th.

RD: I think when we first started to school and I'm not sure about this but I think later part of September was when school started back then as well.

JG: See now days it's into August.

RD: Yes, August.

JG: And their going seems like longer and longer. Diboll this year went all the way into June, after Memorial Day. But, I was just curious when that change because like I said I know a hundred years ago they just waited for everybody to do the cotton and no use having school when nobody is going to be there.

CH: Well that year I went to Shawnee Prairie this superintendent he had us come on Saturday to get us out where we could get in the fields. That was his theory since it was everybody on the farm and we would have to go on Saturdays through the winter to make up them school days. Mr. Travis, Hines Travis was his name.

RD: Charles how would y'all load those log trucks with logs back in those days?

CH: We loaded them with the horses, the team.

RD: Well how did you do that?

CH: You put a chain to each boaster of your logs and you carried that chain under the log and back over and you had another chain come across and you hooked into that yoke I guess you would call it. It rolled that chain, that log up that skid pole. You had two skid poles and if you didn't hook it right one side of your log would get ahead of the other one and you would have to back up.

JG: It had to be balanced.

CH: Yes, you had to balance it and they...

JG: What was the command? You remember the shouts and hollers and things to get the horses to go forward to go back?

CH: Get up, whoa, gee, and haw.

JG: Describe for our listeners what each one of those meant.

CH: Well get up means to go and whoa means stop. Gee you turn to the right and haw you go to the left. And, that...

JG: That was just a language you knew growing up.

CH: You knew that by the time you could walk. (laughter) Some horses would mind and some wouldn't especially if there was a kid driving them and they thought they would overpower that kid.

JG: So, they generally responded differently to different operators huh?

CH: For example, Daddy could pick up them reins and them horses would do the right thing. Most of them knew what to do, but I could pick up them reins and I might have trouble with them. They might just ignore me. We had an old cultivator we pulled with them horses and I had them out in the middle of the field, I was plowing the corn and they got to doing wrong and I got to fighting them horses and they just turned around in the middle of that field and started to the house. (laughter) Here I am plowing corn down.

RD: Oh my goodness! (laughter)

JG: What did your dad say? Did he find out?

CH: That is what I was dreading.

RD: Did your dad ever whip you Charles?

CH: Yes.

RD: What did he whip you with? Be honest!

CH: Well he would cut him a switch about six foot long and he worked you over pretty good. You didn't want no more. They didn't do that...I never did get but one like that. He would use that razor strap sometimes. He would pick you up pretty good with it.

JG: What about your mom? What about her disciplinary actions? Did she ever...?

CH: She liked them peach tree switches.

JG: Peach tree switches.

CH: Them plum switches, they would wrap around your legs. She would tear you up.

RD: Make you pull your pants legs up ever?

CH: No she wouldn't do that. I had them rolled up anyway. (laughter)

JG: Did any of your older brothers and your older sisters try to discipline you?

CH: Oh, we had our fights just like everybody else. See my sister and my oldest brother they were gone from home and then Grover, me, myself, Grover and Travis were raised together. There were six of us, yes, no five, anyway it was kind of like two separate families. They were already grown and gone from home when I started coming on up.

JG: When they were married and had their families did they live nearby or did they move off?

CH: Well sometimes L. T. worked in Houston, he worked construction some but most of the time they all lived within twenty miles of each other.

JG: When was it that you got a job moving off?

CH: Well...

JG: You graduated high school in '53.

CH: I went in the Army then.

JG: Went into the Army, okay.

CH: I got out in '55.

JG: Was Korea still going on when you joined?

CH: Yes, they quit fighting two weeks later. They had already quit fighting when I got there.

JG: When you got there, too late though.

CH: I did go there.

JG: You did go to Korea. Did you see any combat?

CH: No, no.

JG: How many of your classmates and things like that from that general area might have joined up?

CH: Well myself and Cecil Martin and Curtis Craven. I believe that was all that went about then.

JG: Was there a draft or you just wanted?

CH: It was a draft then. Cecil and I just went up there and told them to send us our notice. We were ready to go.

JG: You were ready to go. Why was that?

CH: Well, for instance I went up to several places in Lufkin to apply for a job and they told me to come back when I satisfied the draft. So, to tell you the truth about it I didn't know what to do. I was just...I had been in school 12 years and somebody else telling me what to do and we really weren't prepared. So, I just said I'll just go on in the army and that is what I did. I got out...

JG: Then you had people still telling you what to do.

CH: Yes, yes, didn't have to worry about nothing.

JG: Well how was that? Any experiences you care to share about that, about your army days?

CH: No, I wouldn't take nothing for it. I had a good time in the Army, you know, there is sometimes it got serious.

JG: You got to see the other side of the world anyways didn't you?

CH: Yes, I did.

JG: What about, was that your first time to really be, not just physical distance but maybe seeing people from other lifestyles, other backgrounds, what about that interacting with the rest of the world outside of your neighborhood?

CH: Well you take Korea for instance that is one of the oldest countries in the world.

JG: Korea yes.

CH: And they still live in grass huts and that was just amazing to me, you know.

JG: So, you interacted and saw the Korean people?

CH: Oh yes, we would go to town. They were friendly, but I just couldn't figure out why they wasn't...I don't know the word to pull out...why they wasn't advanced more than what they were.

JG: What about your fellow soldiers, just people that you met in boot camp and your unit and all that, anybody from big cities that you met?

CH: Oh yes, we met some of every kind. They just...well it's just like any gathering you know it's no two people the same but it is amazing how well you get along. It is just a good experience.

RD: Did you and Dubble stay together by any chance?

CH: No, we didn't. When we separated at San Antonio and then I run into him. He went to Korea also and I run into him when we were getting ready to go home. That was the only time I run into him over there and Curtis, I run into him when we were coming home. That was it. That is the only ones I ran into.

JG: So, what did you do when you came back? I guess you registered in Lufkin. Is that where you joined up for the Army?

CH: Yes.

JG: And then when you got out of the army now you didn't have anybody telling you what to do again.

CH: Well, I played for awhile and then I started working construction.

JG: What was your first job in construction? Who did you work for?

CH: I worked for Brown and Root.

JG: Brown and Root out of Houston?

CH: Yes, but we were up at Striker Creek. I believe that was the first one I was on.

JG: Striker Creek?

CH: Yes, building that power house up there. I was a helper.

JG: A helper. I was going to ask you where you learned welding. I know you did a lot of welding later. Did you learn any trade that helped you when you were in the army?

CH: No, no.

JG: So, you just got a construction job I guess with Brown and Root.

CH: Yes, I just started helping welders and they will teach you. I also went to school at Beaumont.

JG: Lamar?

CH: Yes.

JG: Okay. Did you finish there? Did you get a degree?

CH: Yes, I got a degree. I don't know if I got a degree in welding or not but that is what I took, mostly that and math and English. I went there quite awhile.

JG: So, you lived in Beaumont for awhile?

CH: Yes, and as soon as I got to get me a job welding I quit going.

JG: Now when you were in Beaumont going to school did you have a job also?

CH: Yes, I worked at a service station during the daytime and went to school in the evenings.

JG: Okay, did you continue to hunt and fish during that time?

CH: Every chance I got.

JG: Did you do a lot of that in the Beaumont area or did you come back up here?

CH: I still came back up here and did it. Back then those little wire nets were real popular.

JG: Little wire nets?

CH: Little wire nets about 18 inches in diameter. You would catch a lot of catfish then and if you wanted a mess of fish you put one out.

JG: Was fishing better then or when you were a kid?

CH: It was better then.

JG: Better later.

CH: Yes.

JG: Is there a reason for that? Were you a better fisherman then maybe?

CH: I don't know. It's kind of like Dick said, we grew up there and that big drought started in the late '40's and went on into '50's. I remember several years there we just couldn't catch no fish. Do you have a restroom?

JG: Yes sir. We can pause this.

[Recording is paused]

JG: We took a little break there and now we are back. We were just talking a little bit while the recorder was off about maybe some of the other parts of life, living back in that time period. We were talking about clothes washing and taking baths and things like that. Do you care to share anything about that Mr. Havard?

CH: Well Mama washed on a rub board and washed clothes in an old wash pot. You hung your clothes on a clothesline.

JG: What did she use for soap?

CH: Lye soap mostly.

JG: Did she make that?

CH: She made it herself.

JG: Tell us how that was made.

CH: Well they started out with cracklings.

JG: From the grease?

CH: Yes, cracklings where you cook the grease out from your hog then they add a little lye to it. I don't know how much, and you boil that in that wash pot and she always tested it with a chicken feather. When it gets right it will eat that chicken feather up. But, that lye soap is good and that was the basic soap for the clothes.

JG: So, when they boiled it, we've actually got some pictures of them boiling lye soap vats and stuff, but was there a certain consistency they were looking for? When did they turn the heat off?

CH: Well when it got to a certain point she tested it with that chicken feather and if it done that feather right that is when you shut it down.

JG: And, what is involved then letting it cool off?

CH: Letting it cool off and then you cut it in squares. Then when you take it out of there you take it out piece by piece. The rub board, something that was real dirty you had to rub on the rub board and then rinse it through a couple of tubs of water and that rinse water a lot of times you used it for bath water. It would be warm in the evening.

JG: So, how often would she wash clothes?

CH: About once a week. It was an all day deal. I tell you it was work.

JG: Did you ever help especially when you were younger?

CH: I built the fire for her and carry water for her and things like that.

JG: Where did you get the water?

CH: Well, we had it there at the house.

JG: Did you have a well?

CH: No, we had a well for awhile but that well would go dry and we would catch water in some big old vats when it would rain and then we had a spring down below the house that we could carry water from.

JG: How would you carry it just your hands and buckets?

CH: Yes, and buckets and...which is a poor way to carry water but it was just a way of life.

JG: So, the rinse water is what you took your bathes in?

CH: Yes, then in later years...

JG: So, you only took a bath once a week.

CH: Mama was pretty particular about that. You better not have no dirt behind your ears or ring around your neck.

JG: So, you took baths more often then.

CH: Yes, she was real particular about that.

JG: I guess the warm water was really good in the wintertime.

CH: Well you leave it, you draw it up and sometime she would draw up a tub of water and just leave it outside and let it get warm, you know.

JG: Yes, warm up by the sun.

CH: Another words in the wintertime you would have to heat some water.

JG: Did everybody took a bath in the same water or different?

CH: No you use different water.

JG: But you as the child had to haul it up for everybody I guess.

CH: Yes, that was just part of your chores.

JG: Everyday huh?

CH: Yes, then later years, I was already gone from home they drilled a well but the water was sulfur water. It had a bad smell to it when it come out of the ground but if you let it set then that smell would go away. The water tasted good it was clean water but it just had a bad smell when it come out of the pipes.

JG: Did your dad, besides the jobs and things you have already mentioned did he ever have any type of regular job? Did he ever work for an outside company like you worked for a company as a welder, a trade, did he ever do that?

CH: Yes, he worked for Carter some.

JG: Okay.

CH: He hewed those oak piling for them, him and Lee Outlaw, they used to build those trestles on those bridges with.

JG: The pilings, they would do them out of oak trees.

CH: Then he was a blacksmith for Carter on one job and he hauled gas for Gresham Temple I believe at one time.

JG: Out of Lufkin?

CH: Yes, sir.

JG: Deliver gasoline out of a truck?

CH: Yes sir but, he pretty much worked for himself most of his life.

JG: Was that pretty much what everybody did in that part of the country?

CH: Yes, they pretty well did back then when I was a kid.

JG: Was that fairly common then for your generation to be the one that moved off and got work outside of the area?

CH: I guess it started during the war.

JG: World War II?

CH: Yes.

JG: People moving off.

CH: People moving off. I don't guess the country was ever the same after that.

JG: I know a lot of people, you know they closed Fastrill down around 1941 and some of the people wound up around Port Neches and the refineries and things around Beaumont and some went to the shipyards and even to Orange, the shipyards at Orange. Orange went from 10,000 to 50,000 populations overnight. So was there some of that going on too in your neighborhood?

CH: Oh yes, a lot of them went to like Orange and worked in the shipyards.

JG: Worked in the shipyards at Orange, okay.

CH: I remember it, you know, and the women and kids carried on the farm just like they was there, you know. Daddy didn't go. He stayed at home on that, but a lot of them did. A lot of them did go.

JG: Did some of them start, like your generation, did some of them move down there and stay down there?

CH: You mean to Orange?

JG: Yes, or Beaumont.

CH: Oh yes, a lot of them that went and helped the refinery, hired in to help operate it you know and stayed.

JG: Stayed on and then just started their families down there. But, you came back then right?

CH: I came back, but I never was able to get a good job around here. I worked several jobs at the Paper Mill, you know, on construction was pretty good, but I never could before I started welding I never could get on at what I thought was a good job. So, I left here and I moved back in '97.

JG: Okay, where did you move from?

CH: I was in Houston at the time.

JG: You were in Houston for a good while then. I lived in Houston in some of my younger life until 1981 and I know it has changed night and day since '81. So, you lived through a lot of that in the eighties and nineties you lived there?

CH: Yes, I did. I went back to Houston in about '74 I think. I was living in Dallas and I decided I would go back to work for Brown and Root. So, I did and like I say, Houston has spread out and they are building all the time. But, if a man wants to go to work he can go to work in Houston.

JG: Plenty of jobs huh?

CH: Well, there is always a job somewhere down there. I've seen it pretty bad but there is generally work around there somewhere.

JG: So, what type of welding did you do? What type of jobs?

CH: I was a pipe welder. I worked plant work.

JG: At the refineries a lot?

CH: Yes, the refineries, the Papermill or anything.

JG: Did you keep in touch with this part of the country during that time?

CH: Oh yes, I came home periodically to see mother and Dad. Dad died in '78 and my mom died in '95.

JG: He told me about washing clothes, taking baths, hauling water, making lye soap. Is there anything else that I've neglected? Again, just some of those old ways of growing up not only during that time period but just in that part of the country, that neck of the woods so to speak that we have missed out on.

CH: I'll think of something after awhile.

JG: We talked about fishing a little bit and hunting, just some of the ways.

CH: We hunted back then with a light, a carbide light.

JG: At night.

CH: And, we made a reflector out of an old T-model lens come out of the headlight, you could polish that and it looked like real pretty brass. That made a good light, spot out there for a deer like that or coons or whatever you was hunting.

JG: It would light up their eyes huh?

CH: Yes, that was the light before the little battery lights came.

JG: Charlie was anybody trapping in there in those days?

CH: Yes, I forgot about that.

JG: Trapping?

CH: Yes, they all trapped most of the year. The grown-ups trapped and sold those coon hides and mink hides and fox.

JG: Coon, mink and fox.

CH: Coon, mink and possum.

JG: Possum, okay.

CH: A lot of them would skin a possum but some of them wouldn't fool with them.

JG: I misunderstood you there, but we've been seeing several foxes in our neighborhood. I don't remember seeing them very much but just the last few years.

RD: You are forcing them out of where they are they have got to go somewhere.

CH: Yes.

JG: Did you remember seeing many foxes when you were a kid?

CH: Oh yes, we shot every one we saw.

RD: They caught your chickens.

CH: Yes, they would get your chickens, sure would. They were sly.

JG: We even had one up here at The History Center several years back. It was like the first year or two here. They would bed down in one of those beds and then landscapers started noticing them and they would just bed down there.

RD: We had one raise a litter of puppies underneath our front porch.

JG: Yes, I remember you telling me about that. She never did come back another time did she?

RD: No.

CH: Somebody probably got her.

JG: So, did your family ever do any trapping?

CH: Daddy trapped every winter when he was younger.

JG: Okay, so where would he have sold the coon skins and stuff to?

CH: Well, you had a fur buyer in Lufkin. I can't remember. I can't pull out his name, the old fur buyer. Then those fur buyers would show up on certain days. We would dry them hides. He would stretch them, back then he would stretch them and dry them and carry them in, but now they carry them in green. What you call green, they just skin him and carry him in. They don't...you can put them in the freezer now and save it and sell it.

RD: You remember when old man Wes Carnes caught that first coyote?

CH: Yes.

RD: Caused quite a few (unintelligible) didn't it?

CH: Yes sure did. Do you ever see Wesley?

RD: Once a year.

CH: Once a year.

JG: So, what about the coyote?

CH: I don't remember the story but that old man he is talking about was a pretty sly old man. He never did work for nobody but himself did he?

RD: No, he was a good trapper. But, nobody had ever seen a coyote before, is what it was. I always attributed their rival about the same time the chicken grower came in and the chicken grower was tossing their chickens just out the back door that died you know, and I think that had a whole lot to do with the speedy development of the coyote population because the red wolf were gone about that time or just a little bit before that. They caught the last red wolves in Chambers County in the '70's I believe, and the coyotes came in right after that. Well no, yes, or right before that. The coyotes arrived in the '50's. They caught the last red wolves in Chambers County in the '70's I think.

CH: You remember back in the '70's there when they said there was no more red wolves in Texas?

RD: Yes.

CH: I was coming through the edge of the Big Thicket and cut through from Huffman to Cleveland, I cut through them back roads, and there was one that high crossed the road in front of me.

JG: He is showing about three feet tall.

CH: Yes, he was tall and big.

RD: You reckon it could have been a coyote?

CH: No.

RD: See one thing the parks and wildlife did at that time was they trapped those animals, well it was U. S. Fish and Wildlife, and they measured their skulls and did all kind of tests and everything to determine whether or not they had hybridized, the coyotes and the wolves had crossed (**CH:** crossed) and they found it was very difficult to sort out the pure red wolves at that time and that was the last bunch they had. That is the same ones they introduced up into the Smokey Mountains and those islands off of Carolina and places.

JG: What about, you mentioned baptisms and things like that did your family attend church?

CH: Yes.

JG: What church did you go to?

CH: We went to the Baptist.

JG: Did it have a name?

CH: Help me out here Dick.

RD: Missionary Baptist, First Baptist?

CH: No, it didn't belong to no association, Lamberts Chapel.

JG: Lamberts Chapel, okay.

RD: Lamberts Chapel, okay.

CH: What was I guess different back then about now, you know, you kind of had church with work and then you would have a revival.

JG: Church with what? I'm sorry.

CH: If...you didn't have church three or four times a day or just anytime because people was working their crops and things. They would have church on Sunday, one time on Sunday and you had a revival and you'd look up there and there would be five or six preachers sitting on that pew with every one of them from a different church. There would be some Pentecostal, Church of Christ, Methodist, whoever was...

JG: Available.

CH: ...available and everyone of them would get up and make a speech. You would think you were going to starve to death. (laughter)

JG: Now these revivals were they on Sundays also or did they do it at nights?

CH: They would do them through the week at night.

JG: Okay, at nights.

CH: Yes, they would give you time to get your plowing done or whatever was going on.

JG: Would these be under a tent?

CH: No, we would have them old brush arbor meetings back then. I went to several of them.

JG: Describe that tell about that a little bit.

CH: They would just set some post down through an area and run them poles up there and then they would cover the whole tops with pine tops and whatever to make a shade.

RD: Charlie, the last brush arbor I saw was in that community.

CH: Is that right? Well the last one I remember was at Sulphur Springs and like you say, they just have that big open, atmosphere church and...

JG: Come one come all!

CH: ...come one come all. That is what I was getting at with like we would have that church up there at Lambert's Chapel and people from over here right out here at Beulah there would be some preachers from Beulah over there, Saron, Zavalla, wherever they had transportation. That was the biggest thing back then was transportation.

JG: Did the church ever have a bus or anything or borrow the schools bus?

CH: No.

JG: You didn't volunteer the schools bus for that?

CH: No, the school bus wasn't quite as available back then.

JG: So, how would people that would come from these revivals would they come from far away?

CH: They would come in wagons, cars, horses.

JG: I was going to ask you how they got there, wagons cars and horses.

CH: Yes and that church house would be full, Shawnee Prairie, people would come from down there and it went the same way when they had church at Saron or have revival people from up in there would go down there. The name of the church didn't make no difference.

RD: Not only did people take their religion more seriously they were not any other social events to attend either and that is where you got to visit.

CH: Yes, you saw people that you hadn't seen in a long time. That was...sometimes during that time everybody might carry a covered dish or something.

JG: Yes, dinner on the ground kind of thing?

CH: Yes, you know.

JG: Did the churches do any kind of cemetery workings and things like that? Do you remember any of those?

CH: No, we had them cemetery workings just...

JG: Just in the community and not necessarily involving the church?

CH: Yes.

JG: How often would that be done?

CH: Once a year mostly. We used to have that Havard reunion and we would go down there and we would work our area and you would come and work your area and the whole cemetery would wound up clean. Then everybody come to the reunion. That is another one of them social deals, Dick. Like I say, some people would come on a horse; some people might come on a wagon and some old cars and things. Some new cars, some old, mostly old and that was another thing like you said, that was a social. You might see people you hadn't seen in ten years.

JG: What would the kids do at these gatherings?

CH: We would go off and get in a creek somewhere (laughter) and fight and everything else. Anything we could do. We would get far enough away from the grownups they couldn't hear us.

RD: You gotta keep in mind that there were people there at those events that essentially... that was all the people they saw all year long. They didn't go into town. They didn't even go to Zavalla. They would have stuff brought into them and that sort of thing. It is just hard to imagine.

CH: You didn't waste a whole lot of money on gasoline. It was cheap but most people didn't have a car and if they did the battery was down on it. There was Joe Dykes, you knew Joe Dykes didn't you?

RD: Yes.

CH: You know he had a pretty good size family. You know Freddie, something happened to him when he was born. He was a little bit mentally slow and he come up there to the old church one night and of course he had this old car and the battery was down on it and had to push it to start it and somebody told Freddie said "you get back son you might get hurt" and Cecil, his brother, said "let him push he can push as good as you can." I never will forget that. Cecil wanted somebody to push it.

RD: All they needed was some beef wasn't it.

CH: Yes, he just wanted some beef on that old car. It is quite a bit different church meetings than what they are now.

RD: Hot sometimes.

CH: Yes, everybody had one of those Gipson Metcalf fans.

RD: That is right.

JG: So pretty much did everybody in the community attend church?

CH: Oh yes, like he said, you went there and you might not go anywhere else for a month or two.

JG: Have you read Miriam Havard Tatum's writings and books and things. Do you kind of agree with a lot of what she said?

CH: Yes, I agree with a lot she said but, she left a lot out, you know.

JG: Tell us what she left out.

CH: Well, I can't...without...

JG: I'm not trying to get you...just some of the things that we can capture that we don't know about is what I'm after. Not necessarily trying to critique her book or anything.

CH: What I mean is there is several people she left out that she didn't get in there.

JG: Just wasn't able to work everything in.

CH: Yes, but I know it was a publishing deadline probably caused that.

JG: But if you had the opportunity to tell more than she told use this opportunity to tell this next generation or even today's generation some of the things they need to know about or hear about.

CH: I'd have to read the book again.

JG: Oh okay.

CH: I read it a long time ago.

JG: Yes sir, yes sir. I remember she talked a lot about the gatherings and the social events and how big that was and the church revivals. We've even seen especially for Manning and of course it's typical of a lot of communities but the newspapers would write up the revival meetings. Sometimes the pastors of the revivals would write it up and tell about just what's been happening. Like you said, it was a big social event as well as spreading the gospel, evangelism and things like that. I just wanted to use the opportunity if we could to not neglect anything. Like I said, I'm sure there is lots of stuff we have left out but can you think of anything else Mr. Donovan, at least right now, while we have Mr. Havard here?

CH: I probably left out a whole lot.

JG: Well it's hard to talk about that amount of time in just an hour or so. We are condensing it down significantly but I thought we did a pretty good job of relating the different life experiences and, you know, we covered a lot of good territory I think.

CH: Well, if this other old boy would have come with me he lives a little further down the river. He lived in Saron.

JG: Saron, okay. And, that is Carl Fan?

CH: No, Carl Fan was a little further down than he was.

JG: Okay, so who are you talking about now?

CH: Burlon Havard, he was going to come with me. He has got back problems or something.

JG: Okay, well I guess if there is nothing else you care to say or add we will turn the thing off. Did you have something else you wanted to add?

CH: Not necessarily, like you say you start thinking in a time like this and your mind goes blank. I'll be driving down the road and I'll think of a lot of things I should have told.

JG: Yes sir, yes sir. Well if you think about enough of those give us a holler and we can do another one.

CH: Okay.

JG: Well again I sure appreciate it.

CH: Well thank you for having me.

JG: You are welcome, thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW