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**Interview with
EUNICE GRAY
October 16, 1987**

Place of Interview: Sanger, Texas
**Interviewer: Jim Renner and
Kate Singleton**
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Oral History Collection

Eunice Gray

Interviewer: Steve Renner;
Kate Singleton

Date: October 16, 1987

Place of Interview: Sanger, Texas

Mr. Renner: We're visiting today with Ms. Eunice Gray of Sanger, Texas.

Ms. Gray: My grandfather saw this house, one like it, in Jefferson, Texas, so he stopped and found out who built the house and got the carpenter. He came out here, and it took him nine months to build the house. He came home bringing all the lumber and everything he needed from Jefferson. It had the first wallpaper that was seen out in the countryside, and my mother said that people would come there to Elm and bring their lunch on Sundays, and then my grandmother would show them the house, let them go through it.

She had it furnished very beautifully. The love seat of it is in Waco at my cousin's home. I guess the main bedroom suite of furniture is

in Del Rio, Texas. A cousin down there has it. A cousin in Fort Worth has one of the tables. There are a lot of girls in the family, eight sisters. I am descended from a son, so the boys didn't get much. You know how the girls take what they like.

Renner: You say it was built in 1878. Which way does it face?

Gray: It faced north. It was on the south side of the old Pilot Point road. Do you remember where the paved area of that old road was? It was a concrete area that went through the very lowest part. It came down off of a hill and down to the low part.

Renner: Right by the Elm Fork?

Gray: Yes.

Renner: Right by the water?

Gray: The next big hill, that's the Morrow place. That paved area might have been as far as three miles from that house, or two miles. Anyhow, you went up the hill, and this house set on this hill. Now I can go to the lake and see all the wooded area there, and that is where my father would have to go and hunt the cattle when he was

a little boy, he told me. They had ten miles of barbed wire fence around their place, and he had to ride that fence when he was just a kid, eleven years old. He had to ride the fence to make sure all the cattle were in, and my grandfather had a herd of 800 brood cows that he kept all the time. He never got under 800 head of brood cows.

Renner: Plus the mules?

Gray: Oh, yes.

Renner: You said he made quite a bit of money from the mules?

Gray: After he got out of the mule business and went into the cattle business. In the Civil War, he was very ill in the hospital in Memphis, Tennessee. I have his discharge. It said that he had paraplegia in the left side, so it was some form of paralysis, probably from malnutrition. I don't know. He lay there in the hospital and thought of ways that he could make money on this farm if he lived to get home. He had left a wife and two babies at home.

So, he saw the mules on the Mississippi Delta and all the work that was done there. So,

he said, "When I get back, I will raise mules, and then I will get in the cattle business." So, the biography that I'm writing about him talks about his dream because that is the thing he planned when he was so desperately ill, was to raise mules and then get enough money to buy cattle. Of course, he had a farm of 200 acres, but he knew he needed a lot more land if he intended getting into the cattle business. That's how he had to deal in mules. He then bought all these cattle. He bought land and cattle with the money he made with mules. Then he came a big cattleman.

Renner: And his name was?

Gray: Sullivan.

Renner: Sullivan.

Gray: Jack.

Renner: Jack Sullivan.

Gray: J. R. He wouldn't be very proud of the "J. R." in *Dallas* [referring to the corrupt antihero of the popular TV series of the late 1970s and early 1980s]. About a year ago, I thought, "J. R.! Those are my grandfather's initials!"

Renner: I was looking on the map here. This is a Xerox

of the map that comes out of the genealogy of the True and Beavers families.

Gray: She calls it the home place. She left it off once on one of her maps, and I was not a bit pleased about it.

Renner: I imagine.

Gray: Lets see where she had the Morrow place.

Renner: [There] is the Morrow place, and that is right out Highway 455.

Gray: [This] hill is what she has put as the old home place, and that is my grandfather's [here].

Renner: Just east of the Isle du Bois [pronounced "Zillaboy" by local residents] Creek, south of Highway 455?

Gray: Between Elm Fork...

Renner: Between Elm Fork...

Gray: These folks were more or less newcomers. Let me see. In my cemetery book, she has a map, and I called her attention to the practice. She didn't have my grandfather's place on it. There's lots of jealousy among my kinfolks, as you know.

Renner: I also have the USGS [U.S. Geological Survey] topographical maps here.

Gray: Have you seen the map that Sena Wright drew of Denton County?

Renner: I am not sure.

Gray: It is a historical map. I took mine down to the Sullivan Center downtown, and it is down there. She put him on [here]. See, it says: "Jack Sullivan."

Renner: [There] it is, south of the persimmon grove.

Gray: He owned land up in Cooke County, too.

Renner: So, [here] is Fairview, and [right here] are these roads. [This] road is coming down through Fairview.

Gray: Pecan Creek, I think, runs around here.

Renner: [Here] is the creek. Well, we are in the area of DN88, DN194, DN146, and these are all sites of ours. So, you were neighbors of the Newton family?

Gray: Oh, yes.

Renner: "Doc" Newton?

Gray: Yes. This C. L. Sullivan was Jack's father. I have a tax thing that shows ownership of the land. I think he had 3,600 acres at that time. Not Uncle Jack.

Renner: R. J. and C. L. Sullivan...

Gray: That was his father. He bought that

Renner: That would be right...

Gray: Maybe she calls him "Clem," but that's not his name. That's Charles.

Renner: That is in the neighborhood of DN214, DN142, and DN213, south of Fairview but north of Highway 455.

Gray: Yes. I have a very poor copy of the map. I am active in DAR [Daughters of the American Revolution], and I stack all my DAR stuff over here in the corner. I have mine framed, but, see, she has Sullivan Settlement [right up here].

Renner: The Sullivan Settlement is right in the fork of the Big Elm and the Isle du Bois Creek. It says: "Sullivan Settlement, 1850."

Gray: I have had the family come here in 1856, but I do think members came earlier prospecting. The family moved in 1856.

Renner: That is when your family came into the area?

Gray: Yes.

Renner: We are looking at the Denton County Historical Map drawn by Sena Mounts Wright. I was trying to see a date on this.

Gray: It was done in 1936, the Centennial year of Texas.

Renner: In 1936.

Gray: Mine is framed, and I don't know where I got that. But it is in my stuff, so somebody gave it to me. I had mine very carefully framed, but I took it to Sullivan Center downtown.

Renner: I might like to try to photograph [this], too.

Gray: I could get some tape for you to mend it.

Renner: Yes, it becomes split along the seam. The Sullivan Historical Map that we were looking at, which spots the Jack Sullivan place just south of Highway 455, is from the book titled *The Tyson Cemetery, Denton, County, Texas*, which was compiled by Odessa Morrow Isabel in 1977. Where did your people come from when they came into this area?

Gray: Well, they left Tennessee in 1836, came to Missouri, and then from Missouri...I think they were up there for about nineteen years, something like that. Then they came down here from _____.

Renner: Do you know what old country your people come from?

Gray: Ireland.

Renner: From Ireland?

Gray: Of course, I have just gotten back from Ireland. I go over there often. Yes, they came from Ireland. I think it is interesting that my father, who was born in 1876, talked as though he had just gotten off the boat. He loved being Irish, and he would say, "Don't fool with this Irishman," or "Don't get my Irish ire up." We had an uncle, my father's uncle, Uncle Gerald, who lived out north of where my grandfather lived, Gerald Sullivan. His farm joined Ms. Morrows great-grandfather's farm, joined it on the east. He told my cousin, Wayne Rice, that the Sullivans came to America--three brothers--from Ireland with Lord Baltimore. Now, that had to be oral history because Uncle Gerald doesn't know a thing in the world about Lord Baltimore. Lord Baltimore came to Maryland in 1636. So, on my first trip to Ireland, which was thirty-three years ago, I went to the tower. They have a Department of Genealogy, the only nation that supports that, and they have their genealogists who are very eager to help you. It is really a

tourist "come-on." But, he told me that their records had been destroyed that go back to Lord Baltimores leaving from County Cork to come to America. He said, "I will tell you this, though. If three brothers came with Lord Baltimore, they probably were in the army because he brought his own army with him, and he recruited him out of County Cork." So, we are now within two generations of whoever came over. We have traced it back to two generations. I had a cousin here yesterday, a very brilliant woman from San Francisco, and I said, "Now, you are the one that I want to do this work in the Maryland Archives because somewhere I know there is a list of those men who came as soldiers or whomever." One of my history books--I have forgotten which one it was--says there was nineteen men of royalty that came with Lord Baltimore. Well, I don't think mine are royalty. I think they were soldiers, just like I was told in Ireland.

Now, on this trip to Ireland, I did no research. But two years ago, I went again to do research and tried again to find the list, and

they said their records had been pillaged with all the fighting and so forth that had gone on in Ireland. They said they did not have the list, but I know there are lists of those people. So, I am within two generations of these people. They came from Maryland, evidently, to Virginia, because that is where I am now with the Sullivans.

Renner: Virginia through Tennessee.

Gray: No, Maryland, to Virginia, then Virginia into Tennessee, and Tennessee to Missouri. It was too cold, so then they came from Missouri up here.

Renner: Did any other families come in with your family?

Gray: The Hammonds family, of course. My father's grandmother was a Hammonds, the daughter of Lieutenant Colonel Leroy Hammonds of the War of 1812. They moved from Tennessee to Missouri. Then George Hammonds, her nephew, my great-grandmother's nephew, came and married her oldest daughter, and that's Aunt Mame, who built the house that just recently has been moved away. Her father was a Sullivan, but her mother was a Hammonds, and she married a first cousin,

who came to visit them in Missouri. So, that couple with their children came here with the Sullivans. See, the Sullivans and the Hammonds family came together, because they were one and the same. But they were separate families.

Renner: And that house is DN157.

Gray: Yes.

Renner: That was one of three houses that was the middle of three houses?

Gray: Yes. Richard's house was west of it.

Renner: I know that Richard's house was toward...well, it is still...that house is still standing, isn't it?

Gray: I think so. Then the party barn burned, which was between. That was Richard's barn that was made into a three-story party barn, and it burned.

Renner: Then west of Highway 157, down on the Elm Fork, there is a third house?

Gray: I don't know whose house that was.

Renner: Were they all built at about the same time?

Gray: I wouldn't say so because George...I believe I read this story the other day, that George's house was built in 1874. I really didn't think

he waited that late to build that house, but I am sure that is right. Richard was George's son, so, you know, he wouldn't build a house at the same time his daddy did. Richard lived west of his father, George. That house went to John, another brother. See, there was George, the daddy; then there were John, Richard, David, on and on.

Renner: So, the center house is the Charles Sullivan home, and he was the...

Gray: No, my grandfather bought his place, his father's place, and those were log houses. Of course, the Hammonds house started out as log and had a frame. I can't tell you where Charles--that's the daddy--I can't tell you where his house was. Now, my grandfather bought the place--C. L. Sullivan.

Renner: Oh, I am sorry. That is on Highway 455. I was looking at C. M. Sullivan.

Gray: Now, that could be her great-grandfather, Odessa Isbell.

Renner: How about the other neighbors in the area, the Beavers family...

Gray: Let me show you something. I found this

yesterday, and I thought now I am going to go and have it copied, and I didn't do it. After this cousin came...and she stayed until dark, and I had never seen her before. The class book for the Pleasant Grove Class of 1869...this is my great-grandfather, Charles L. Sullivan. [Here] are the people that were in his class, and I assume it was the Methodist church. It could have been a school, you can see the Newtons and Sullivans, the Joneses...

Renner: The Beavers, Richardsons, Stricklands, Cosner, several Cosners, Johnsons. The old Johnson place is on Roy Jones's farm.

Gray: Roy is my cousin. He is on the other side. My father's mother was Roy's family, and my father's father was a Sullivan, and he married a Jones. Reason Jones was my great-grandfather, the one that they found the pistol in the woman's casket. Well, that was his second wife.

Renner: Jane Armstrong told me that story.

Gray: That was his second wife. The first time he married, he married a Montgomery. You have heard about the Montgomerys; there are plenty of them. Talking about Reason Jones...I am away

from the Sullivans. Reason Jones's daughter, who married a Sullivan. That's my ancestor. The first time he married a Montgomery, they had two sons and nine daughters; and the second time he married, he had nine sons and two daughters. Twenty-two children.

Renner: Twenty-two children.

Gray: And they were reversed. First, it was nine daughters and two sons; and the second marriage, where the pistol was in the casket, by that wife he nine sons and two daughters. One of them is Mrs. Jacobs at Pilot Point, and the other one is Mrs. Alexander.

Renner: The Alexander family, I know that name.

Gray: So, that is Reason Jones. When my trandparents married, the ones who later built that house... Reason Jones's daughter married Jack Sullivan, and they built that house. Reason Jones gave them two Negroes for a wedding present, two slaves. So, it was three miles from this house over to the Jones house, Reason Jones's house. But the Negroes would just spend the night walking, going home to see Mama and Papa and coming back and trying to work the next day.

So, my grandfather gave them back. Even though they were a wedding present, he returned them. He said, "I don't want them spending that time on the road. It's not good for them, and they can't stay away from your place. So, thank you very much, but here are your Negroes." He did that before the Civil War. I think it was about 1852 that they married, but I am not real sure. I can look it up in a minute, but I'm not real sure if that was when it was. But he gave the slaves back.

Renner: Speaking of slaves, just to the east of Jack Sullivan's place, wasn't that a black area?

Gray: Yes. A very fine black man and his wife owned that. I saw their descendants at my aunt's funeral in Pilot Point. I knew they lived there. It was across the road, I think, on the north side of the road, right down from my grandfather's place.

Renner: Okay, but still [this side] of Highway 372?

Gray: Yes.

Renner: But north of Highway 455?

Gray: Yes. I can't remember their names, but do you know who they were?

Renner: I don't know their names offhand. That would be in the neighborhood of DM229. Did you happen to know any of the people who lived south of Highway 455 over on the other side of the Isle du Bois Creek, say, due east of your grandfather's?

Gray: Colonel Wyre. I am full of tales (chuckle). Well, that's my problem, not waiting for people to ask questions. I am looking now for the date the slaves were given to them, but I guess it is not in there. [Here] is the tax receipt that I found in Aunt Mame's things, and it was made out during the Confederacy. He paid three dollars. I guess they just went around from farm to farm. So, I went ahead and bought something out of the Hammonds house. I bought a chair and a chest, and the boy had this tax receipt, and you can see that it says: "C. L. Sullivan." That is Jack's father. But this is a story about Colonel Wyre.

Renner: November, 1863, or is it November...
"Confederate Tax Receipt."

Gray: Yes, C. L. Sullivan. That is Charles Lee. That is the one who came in 1856. Let me tell you

about Colonel Wyre. We had two Negro women here in Sanger who washed for my grandmother, and they came in this great, big wicker buggy. You have seen baby buggies in antique pieces that are made of wicker. Well, this was a horse-drawn wicker buggy with two black Negro women, Nancy and Molly, her mother. They came here to my grandmother's house to wash, and then they would tie the horse across the street, with this great, big wicker buggy. It had fenders, and it just fascinated me.

I was about four or five years old. After I was grown, married, gone, came back, I said, "Tell me, Daddy, [to my father] where on earth did that wicker buggy come from? I never in any museum or anywhere have seen a wicker buggy like that." Papa said, "Well, Colonel Wyre lived east of Grandpa out there. He came from Kentucky, and his people raised fine horses. He came in great style." So, he had that wicker buggy, according to my father, driven through the country to Pilot Point, to his place. Papa said he would ride into Pilot Point in great style in that wicker buggy.

But the wicker began to get brittle and break, and it wasn't so attractive. He gave that to Jack and Molly Embry, our Negro wash woman and her husband, and she would come to our place with Nancy, her daughter, in that. Of course, to a child it was something out of a fairy tale, seeing this old wicker buggy drawn by a horse.

Now, back to who lived east of Grandpa, I know that Negro family did, but, as I say, I don't remember their names. If I would hear it, I would know, but I can't remember their names. At my aunt's funeral--she lived to be about ninety-six--Mrs. Whitley over in Pilot Point... these black people worked there, and they had lived across the road from my grandparents, their ancestors. That black family had representatives at the funeral, and I said to my cousin--this was his mother's funeral--"Who was those black people?" I knew it was not her maid or her maid's daughter or whoever in Pilot Point. He said, "Oh, that is the black family who lived across the road from Grandpa." I still can't tell you their names.

Renner: I know a few. Maybe the Phillips family? There was a Colonel Smith, who lived around there someplace. The Johnson family?

Gray: I think they are white. I can't remember their names. Odessa might know their names. I tell you who would know. Have you met the Shelton boys?

Renner: No.

Gray: In Pilot Point?

Renner: No.

Gray: They are real smart boys. Their mother was a Hammonds, and these Negroes lived right east of their mother on the same side of the road.

Renner: Okay, did they live near the Newton place that was on the other side of the road?

Gray: You would go by that Negro place. No, the Negro place would be...I don't know. When I look back, I can't remember. I believe Ira Newton here...have you talked to Ira?

Renner: No, I haven't.

Gray: You know, he is ninety-two, and he has all his "marbles."

Renner: He does? I don't believe that I have run into him.

Gray: He lives in a lovely home up here on Catherine Lane.

Renner: I have talked with "Doc" Newton.

Gray: That's his younger brother. Ira is smart, smart. He is ninety-two.

I am trying to find when they gave the slaves back. This is the material that I have for my book, how I knew about Grandpa, as my cousins had written and told me.

Now, [here] is a picture of my dad, sitting in front of this house, I mean, in front of the picture. But that is the only time I have seen a picture of the man at that house. He called it his birthplace, but, of course, there was a house before that he was born in. He was born in _____ house.

Renner: This picture is September 20, 1956, in the *Sanger Courier*.

Gray: It was his birthday, wasn't it?

Renner: It says: "Open House To All Well-Wishers."

Gray: What age?

Renner: Eightieth birthday.

Gray: That is how old I am now. I had my eightieth in August. Oh, yes, I had a big party. I had 200

guests, and it was a 100-degree temperature. Now, my grandfather was a very remarkable man, the best man I ever knew. He was remarkable in that even though he was country person, ranchman, he was the founder of three banks. [Here] is Denton County National, which is now M-Bank. It says, "Thirty-one men with vision." [Here's] my Grandfather Sullivan, and he was a director of the Red River National Bank, which was a very early bank in Gainesville; and he also was director of the first bank in Sanger, Sanger Citizen's Bank. My grandfather was superior in that he was smart, a banker, a good man.

Renner: He was a "doer."

Gray: Mrs. Morrow has an uncle who is a Baptist preacher. He says to me at family reunions: "You know, everybody in the family went to Uncle Jack for advice." I said, "Well, that's my grandfather." I said, "Let me tell you, they got good advice because he was a good man."

Renner: [This] is a little pamphlet that I am looking at. It says: "Thirty-one Men with Vision, Denton County National Bank, 75th Anniversary."

It says that J. R. Sullivan was one of the founders.

Gray: A doctor here, Dr. Rice, who married a Sullivan, was a schoolteacher out at the Fairview School, and he stayed with my grandparents in that house. Their cowboys stayed upstairs. See [that] outdoor stairwell? The house was not connected to that room. In other words, cowboys slept there, and then they went down and went into the dining room. [telephone interruption]

Renner: We were talking about the cowboys that separately ate and then...

Gray: So, Dr. Rice, as he later became, stayed there. He told Grandpa: "If I teach two more years after this year, I will have enough money to go to medical school." My grandfather said, "Oh, you don't have to do that. I will send you to medical school. I will put the money in the bank in Pilot Point, and you go to school." He went to Vanderbilt [University, in Nashville, Tennessee]. He said, "Someday, you pay me back, if you can." See, he gave him two years. That's what he gave him, which is so great, I think. So, he went away to medical school and

came to Sanger, married my grandfather's niece, and he practiced all of his life right here. So, before he died, he said to me: "You have a wonderful heritage, Eunice. Your grandfather was the best man I ever knew." I said, "Well, let me tell you this. You are the best man I know, so it is a real compliment that you would say that about my grandfather." I know he paid Grandpa back. It was never the money; it was the time he gave him, because he was going to have to teach two more years.

Renner: He gave that back, too, by coming back here to practice. When did he teach at the Fairview School?

Gray: Well, let's see. My father was in the first grade, and I think he was four years old. No, it wouldn't be that far back, either. Papa was born in 1876. It wouldn't be in 1880. I believe it was 1885 probably when he taught there. He came to Sanger to practice in 1890, I believe, so I would say about that...I may be off a few years.

I think if I went and called Ira, he would tell me the name of the black family that lived

across the road and down.

Renner: What I might do is, if you think it might be okay with him, I will contact him. I may want to talk to him next week.

Gray: He is in excellent shape. He still drives his car and gets around. He may be a little bit deaf, but I am not sure. I see him every Sunday at church. He drives his car. He is ninety-two. I'm sure he's ninety-two. I am just amazed that he is so well preserved. He worked for an oil company and retired from them, quite well compensated. He worked for an independent, and they gave him holdings, etc., as well as his regular retirement. I think Ira would be a good source of information because he goes back more years than I do. What I know, I have heard from my father about how the wicker buggy came and all that sort of thing.

My grandfather-in-law was a horticulturist. He was always interested in shrubbery and trees. My aunt, who was born right after the Civil War, told me...she lived in Ardmore, Oklahoma. Her son is president of First National Bank there. She told me that when she was little girl, five

or six years old, early in the morning she would hear a man calling: "Trees! Trees!," and she knew that a wagonload of trees had come. So, the cowboys all go up and got out and started planting trees on my grandfather's place. Not always fruit trees, necessarily, but he marked his boundary lines with bois d'arcs, Papa said. I remember they had an apple orchard, too, Papa told me.

Once there was a Irishman from Ireland who came the country just going to West Texas or somewhere to work, and he stayed there with my grandfather and grandmother three or four years as their gardener. Papa said that he would take hay and fix little houses in each of the four corners of the garden, and he would put the root vegetables in these little block hay houses around. In other words, if I needed potatoes, my daddy would go out with a pan and knife and peel the potatoes that he got from these hay houses. The first trip I made to Ireland, I saw those houses in the corners of the garden. He would put sweet potatoes in one corner and onions in another one, and root vegetables, you

know, the Irish potatoes. I saw some of those in Ireland, so immediately I connected the garden.

To tell you something about my grandfather's character, how he felt about people, I went to the Masonic Lodge down here, and it was the only time I had ever been upstairs. They were installing officers, and people were invited by special invitation. Over the door it said in great big letters--and it is there now--"I am my brother's keeper." That is the reason my grandfather was such a big Mason. My mother said my grandfather gave more time and more money to the Masonic Lodge than he did to church, but that was what he liked, was that motto: "I am my brother's keeper."

I am going to tell you this about him. A family came through in a covered wagon going west, and they had a child who was sick. They were camping down there on Elm Creek. My grandfather would go by and see what people needed, and why they were staying along the shore or whatever. So, he saw the boy, and he was about twelve or thirteen. These people

said, "Well, he has been real sick. We have taken him into Pilot Point to the doctor, but we are wanting to go our way." They were going out to West Texas. So, my grandfather said, "I want to tell you. If you want to leave that boy here with me--and we are sound citizens--you go on your trip; and you write to me, and I will bring him out there on the train to you at no cost to you. I will bring him to you." So, he took the sick boy and nursed him back to health, and my grandmother took care of him. He left them when he was twenty-three years old. But the parents did write. The boy had started to school, and then he started working for my grandfather as a cowboy. He sort of liked it. So, finally, I think Papa said he was twenty-three when he finally went out to West Texas somewhere and joined his family. Papa said we never heard from him again. I thought that was the way people lived and did in that time. He saw the need of a sick child. He felt that was his obligation to take care of him.

Renner: Well, it was quite a busy house then. I was being impressed at the character of your

grandfather and how busy that house must have been, how full of people it must have been.

Gray: I have a list [here] of the cowboys that worked for Grandpa. Papa gave it to me. Now, [here] is part of my correspondence with the Maryland Historical Society on the family coming over here. I have got to get somebody that has time...State Historical Commission...yes, they have this history of Maryland, but they can't let it out on an interlibrary loan, so I guess we are going to have to do is get a researcher to go there.

Renner: They sent you *The Early Settlers of Maryland*.

Gray: That's the book that they don't let anybody check out.

Renner: You have to get it at the Fort Worth or Dallas Public Library.

Gray: Yes, they do say that, don't they? See, I hadn't read it lately, and I had forgotten.

Renner: Or maybe I could get an interlibrary loan. Well, not being farmers, was that unusual in the area? Did most of your grandfather's neighbors farm while he was a rancher? Was it unusual to be a rancher?

Gray: He was a farmer until he got the idea during the Civil War of raising mules and buying more land and then getting into the cattle business. He was a farmer, too. I think he was nineteen the first time he came to Texas with Uncle George Hammonds. See, that was his sister's husband that built the Hammonds house.

Renner: That is the George Hammonds down on Elm Creek, the Arkansas Hill Road and Elm Creek?

Gray: Yes. He came with him to Texas.

Renner: What kinds of things did he raise when he farmed?

Gray: I've got some write-ups about him, and I took them out yesterday so I would have them today, and now I have laid them down somewhere. He told about the maize, wheat, and oats that he grew on that land.

Renner: Cotton?

Gray: No, no cotton. He might have planted some cotton somewhere around the patches. No, he wasn't into cotton.

He didn't believe in children getting out and working for their parents. He didn't like people and their kids out working. Now, my

father took care of cattle and things like that, but there wasn't cotton picking.

I had these write-ups, and while I was talking to this cousin of mine yesterday, I laid them out because it was an advertisement that Grandpa had put in the paper. It was also a write-up. He was going to sell some land, and he told about the improvements that he had made on it.

Renner: After he came back from the war, back from Memphis, and went into ranching, they must have still grown a few things. Did he grow his own feed?

Gray: Oh, yes.

Renner: So, he was still into oats and hay.

Gray: Oats, hay, and corn.

Renner: How about the garden? What kinds of things did they grow?

Gray: Yes, he was an excellent gardener, and I told you about the Irishman that was here.

Renner: He had a professional gardener then?

Gray: Yes, this man from Ireland that...

Renner: Was there anything unusual in the garden?

Gray: I would think that they lived about like other

people. They'd make their own sausage, mincemeat, and killed their own hogs. I know that he gave the Indians meat. He would give them two or three head of cattle, if they wandered around, so they wouldn't bother any. He'd even butcher the cattle. He even butchered it for them.

Renner: Yes, I wanted to get to the Indians, because I noticed just down the road on this map was an Indian village, just west down Highway 455 on the other side of the Elm Fork.

Gray: He had three log houses in Pilot Point, Grandpa did, and he would take his cowboys, take his immediate family, his mother and his old maid sister, and his cowboys. He had three log houses, and he kept up three establishments. Now, that is in my book that I had written about Sanger. When he heard rumors of Indians and knew they were a threat to his family, they would load up and go to Pilot Point. See, Pilot Point was founded in about 1847 or something like that, and he would take them into Pilot Point.

Renner: It was 1846, the Denton County Historical map

says.

Gray: He would take them in there. I asked my aunt: "Tell me how you got ready." She said, "Oh well, you could buy some things there, but we always took our clothing and our bedding and things." The houses weren't furnished yet; all three of them weren't furnished. She said they would carry some of these things in, but they could buy flour, salt, meal, and those things in town. She said that they always got away in a hurry, taking their linens, towels, and clothing, whatever they needed.

Renner: So, there were Indian disturbances?

Gray: Yes. The Indians killed people up north of where my grandparents lived. They killed a family up there, and that's in my book, too. I am so mad at myself for not coming home and organizing all of this, particularly his write-ups of the property that he had for sale. Let me see if, in talking about the Indians, I told what my aunt said.

Renner: So, there really was an Indian village just west of the Elm Fork?

Gray: That must have been much further back. I don't

believe the Indians were there in 1856 when my people came. I don't believe they were.

Renner: I have heard of them up on...oh, west of Tioga, on Indian Creek, up on Wolf Creek, up in there. There was a village up there in memory, but these were very friendly.

Gray: Indians. Well, I don't know. I would think that probably a lot of people thought that the Indians didn't get around where there were trees, but I had an idea that water was the thing that drew them. Now, that is the idea that I had. Let me see about Indians. What did I say about them?

Renner: But they did roam...there were Indians passing through the area from time to time?

Gray: Yes. [Here] is about...out west of Bolivar, Indians made frequent raids on the settlements there, and it tells about Joe ___ oldest brother Jim and his excitement when the Indians chased him. I thought maybe I had written about the Indians east of Sanger. [Reading from manuscript] "Indians came east of Sanger in the early days, particularly in the wooded areas of the creeks, in 1868, when Elizabeth Sullivan

Whitley was five years old and in the first grade. It was necessary for the Jack Sullivan family to move into Pilot Point five times that year. Rumors of Indians in the area would send the family to safety. Jack Sullivan had built three log houses in Pilot Point, one for the immediate family, one for his mother and sister, and the third for his cowboys. They would leave on sharp notice.

"In an interview with my aunt, Mrs. Whitley, she said they would load the family linens, covers, and clothing neat and some staples along with keepsakes and leave as soon as possible. There were some stores in Pilot Point that they could buy supplies there, but the houses they kept in Pilot Point were furnished. Finally, Mr. Sullivan built a fine home for his family in Pilot Point, but they preferred the country place and never occupied the Pilot Point house. It was later sold, and it is still one of the finer houses in the town. The family moved to Sanger in 1887." Sena Mounts Wright's map of the early Denton County shows that the Indian village is in the county,

and one is near what later became Sullivan Settlement. It is between Isle du Bois Creek and Aubrey, the _____ family over in Cooke County...now, that is right north of where my grandfather lived, and their tragedy with the Indians was clear in my aunt's memory. Two of the _____ daughters were taken captive. Their father was away when the Indians came. Mrs. _____ held the Indians off with an empty gun, and finally they left. Mrs. Whitley recalled that the Indians went through a field to where Mrs. _____ and the two girls had stopped. They took the two girls and Mrs. _____, the neighbor. Mrs. _____ was turned loose later in a field and was able to get back home, but the _____ girls were murdered by the Indians. They were people that my grandparents knew.

Renner: Were the Indians from these villages?

Gray: Oh, no, I don't think those villages existed much before this time. I think they were before my family came.

Renner: [Referring to map] I see one down on Clear Creek south of Sullivan Settlement. There is one on the Trinity River, the one you were talking

about, and there is another one that I see on Pecan Creek.

Gray: I think that was there way long ago. See, my people came in 1856, and he would hear about them coming down from Oklahoma, and that was when he would bundle his family up and go to Pilot Point. He wanted to get away from it. I wish I had the description of what he raised, because it is such a good one. I might have it in a book.

Renner: People had really fine gardens. They had a variety of things that they raised in their gardens, a varied diet, a really fine diet, a variety of vegetables. You mentioned apples. Did he have pears, peaches, and plums?

Gray: Yes. I know on this table [here] at his house over in the corner, he would have a covered dish, glass compote, and he would have honey in the cone in one covered dish, and at the other end of the table he always had pear preserves. That's my favorite preserves. He had such good ones. In 1909 they got out an edition of the paper here, and it described my grandfather's crops in that paper. I may have copied it in

this book.

Renner: Yes, I would love to get that on the...

Gray: Now, they grew cabbage and made kraut. You have heard how they make kraut.

Renner: How did they?

Gray: They would chop cabbage very fine and put it in a big crock. Then they would put a layer of salt and a layer of cabbage and then another layer of salt and some more cabbage. Then they would put a plate on top and put it in a cool place to ferment. Then they would cook the kraut, and, of course, it was delicious, particularly if you had sausage or something with it.

Renner: Homemade sausage. So, he kept hogs and chickens...

Gray: Yes, and milk cows. They had milk cows and plenty of butter.

Renner: Cheese?

Gray: Yes.

Renner: What part of this did the women do?

Gray: They worked awfully hard. Out east of town, my grandmother was very domestic. My mother was a schoolteacher, kind of like I am, and all that

good housekeeping went by because we had to read books. You look at my house, and you can tell I am not noted as a housekeeper. But my mother told me that her mother-in-law, my father's mother, after the dishes were dried, she took that towel that was used, and she washed it and boiled it and rinsed and hung it out to dry. After each meal, the cup towels were washed. Just like today, you would put the cup towel in the clothes bin and maybe once a week wash. She washed hers after every meal. So, to work like she had to work in keeping a big establishment like that with nine or ten children, I just don't know how she did it.

Renner: With the cowboys and...

Gray: Yes, she fed all of them.

Renner: ...the young boy that your grandfather took in...the schoolteacher.

Gray: Yes. He kept the schoolteacher. Now, she was a daughter of Reason Jones, and they were all that way. They were very domestic and were excellent cooks.

Renner: Did the women do any gardening?

Gray: I don't think so. I think one of my father's

sisters was quite a horsewoman, but he was very ambitious that his children should have better advantages. They had called them "Ma" and "Pa" until Aunt Willie went over to Pilot Point to Franklin Seminary; and when she came back, they all had to say "Mother" and "Father." Papa used to tell that. He said, "We called them 'Ma' and 'Pa' until Willie went over to Pilot Point to Franklin Seminary. She came back, and it was 'Mother' and 'Father.'" "

I have a picture of my grandfather's prize bull, and she did this charcoal picture of it in 1885, of this bull. She was going to Franklin Seminary, studying art. My cousin in Waco has the original drawing, and she wouldn't trust anybody with it. Another cousin took a picture of it, and she had a Negro artist do it, and it's now down at the library, a picture about like [this]. A Negro here did it. Let me show it to you. I think I can lay my hands on this picture. [Here] is the picture of my grandfather. This is Jack Sullivan. [This] is his wife. He had brought her back these clothes from New Orleans. See, she has lace knits and a

pretty necklace and brooch. [That's] my daddy. He was eighty-three when that was made, and [that] is his first great-grandson. [That] is my brother, and [this] is his son, who have twelve children. [Here] I am with my two brothers. [This] is my older brother. [That] was made at Mrs. Bishop's place north of Bolivar. [That] is my really good-looking nephew. Now, his grandfather's bull...[that] is the hired man. [Here] are his two oldest girls when they were babies. [Here] is my grandmother as an elderly woman.

Renner: It says: "Elizabeth and Nancy Sullivan, children of Jack, 1870." Very impressive.

Gray: Mrs. Hundley, their grandmother, and my grandmother were sisters. Their grandfather got into a little scrape in Pilot Point. He went to a dance and shot a Negro in the heel, so he ran off to Mexico--this young "Buck" Hundley. I guess he was about seventeen.

So, my grandfather began getting beautiful hair ropes out of Mexico. He didn't know who was sending him these lariat ropes to catch the cattle with. So, he went to the post office in

Pilot Point and had the ropes traced. It was "Buck," this nephew down in Mexico. So, he went to Aunt Margaret Hammonds, and he said, "I know now that it is 'Buck' that is sending me these ropes." She said, "Oh, Jack, get him home for me." He said, "All right."

So, my grandfather went to the Denton County sheriff's office, and he said, "Now, I know where the boy is, and he had been indicted for shooting the Negro on the heel. I will post his bond and do whatever is necessary to get him back because his mother wants him back." Whatever was necessary, they did. My grandfather paid his way back and went over before the judge and had a hearing and had the case dismissed and got the boy back. But "Buck" knew who to send the rope to, and he sent him two or three of these hair ropes. Then Grandpa began to trace and find out who sent him the ropes, and that was the way it was.

I am just sick that I didn't get all of this material together, because the write-ups in the paper about how many bushels of oats he raised, corn and all that is in these write-ups.

Renner: The next best thing, I guess, is knowing that it is available and that it is not lost.

Gray: I told you that I've been on this trip, and in coming back I have gotten behind with everything. I have let things get mixed up and piled up and so forth. Maybe another time or I could write. I could have copies made and sent to you, if you will give me your address, of his farming activities and what he grew. I thought maybe I had put it in this book--telling of the oats. I don't have this indexed, which, of course, is a mistake. I have so much information, but I don't keep it well organized. I go through it, and then I don't have a special place to put it.

Renner: I do the same thing.

Gray: It is too bad, really. I have a lot of interests. Now, last night it was the library board meeting, and in the morning it is an all-day club. But I have a board meeting coming up at ten o'clock in the morning there in the Sullivan Senior Center downtown. I got my cousin to give us a building. I talked to him fifteen minutes, and he said, "Sure, I will give

it."

Renner: I will leave you my address. It is a simple one out at the institute.

Gray: How long are you going to work on this?

Renner: We are almost finished, but the write-up will probably go on for months.

Gray: Yesterday, while I was talking to this girl from California, I would lay these papers [over here], and then I went to that board meeting last night, and evidently moved them. It had a list of the taxpayers out of the Pilot Point area and all of the land that they owned, and that has all of those people's names in there, Sullivans and everybody, and gives the years. I remember distinctly laying that [there], and the write-up of Grandpa. I thought I have it in these two folders, but I mixed them with something else. So, if you will give me your address, I will send you some copies of what they grew and what his crops made. It told about that. I saw an ad yesterday for some land he had for sale, and it told how many flowing wells he had on this property. So, that should be of interest.

Renner: It would be--the water supply. How about other industries? Sawmill or any lumber activity?

Gray: Not in my family.

Renner: I know that the material for the house came from Jeffersons, and it wasn't from the place, I guess?

Gray: Now the front door to his house here in town, I gave to the library. The house was being remodeled, and a man had it out on his back porch laying sideways. I went over and asked him if he would sell it to me, and he gave it to me. So, I gave it to the library. It leads out onto the patio, and I have a brass plaque. It is the front door to his house. He gave the land for that church where the library is. He was a Baptist, but it was a Presbyterian church. [This] is the Sullivan Addition that starts at the street. This is the old township where I am, but it starts [here]. He had the grazing rights for all of the town and had about eighteen more years to go on the grazing rights on the town site, so that gave him about a fourth of the town. It is called Sullivan Addition, and it starts out here in front of my

house, goes to Bolivar Street, which is main street there downtown, and goes across Highway 455. Anyhow, he built his house on this four-and-one-half acres right across, and he had lots of fruit trees, pecan trees, big garden.

Renner: You say that house is still standing?

Gray: No, it burned. We have a volunteer fire department, and they just couldn't get the water and couldn't save it. I have a painting of it, too, on this brick. My father was eleven when they moved to Sanger. [That] was their house in town.

Renner: It is a two-story, two-chimney...

Gray: Yes, it had three bedrooms upstairs and two down. I was going to find you the name of the man that hired me.

Renner: Now, is this the brick out of the chimney...

Gray: Yes.

Renner: ...that this picture is on.

Gray: Yes, and it was made by the Hundleys over at Pilot Point. They had a brick factory. Mrs. Hundley was my grandmother's sister. It was their boy that was down in Mexico sending the hair ropes back.

[Tape 2, Side 1]

Gray: He couldn't speak Spanish. That wouldn't be any fun, would it?

Renner: Not much, no.

Gray: Not for a boy that had always known everybody.

Renner: We were looking at a painting of her grandfather's house in Sanger, and the brick that it is on from the fireplace appears to be made by the Hundleys in Pilot Point. It appears to be a handmade brick. That's the real thing, local brick from Pilot Point. I just wanted to get that in. That is a handmade Pilot Point brick.

Gray: I have a whole lot of it. When the house burned and they tore it down, they told me I could have as many bricks as I could carry off. I went over and got quite a lot. Charles Sullivan deeded to my grandfather 101 acres for \$400, and it says here: "September 15, 1862." That will be all right. I was thinking about 1856. That is when they came, so that's when Grandpa's original land was sold--101 acres from C. L. [Charles] to J. R. [John]. That is a copy from the Denton County courthouse. Then, on October

26, 1857, he bought another 160 acres for \$400 from J. N. Matthews. That was on the water down the creek.

Renner: Now, that is over there by Vaughn Town, wasn't it? That probably was Cosner in those days. So, your family must have been in and around Vaughn Town quite a bit?

Gray: Oh, yes.

Renner: Just right across the river?

Gray: In Cooke County, too. My grandfather, when he got ready to sell the land east of town, he cut off a farm for each of his brothers. So, that is the kind of guy he was.

Renner: Quite a character.

Gray: Well, okay, here is some stuff that I was looking for. These are notes from my father, Sam H. Sullivan, about his father, Jack Ramsey Sullivan. [Reading from documents] "Smoky Ridge Ranch, along with the old home place, six miles east of Sanger, owned by Jack Sullivan in the fall of 1897. He bought 1,000 steers at Purcell, Oklahoma, and had them shipped to Sanger. It was two trainloads of cattle. He already had 800 head of breeding cattle on his

ranch, and he also had 185 head that he fed out with 1,000 steers. In 1898, Dad, Sam H. Sullivan, made thirteen trips to Kansas City with trainloads of cattle." So, that is how big he was. He shipped to Saint Louis, Kansas City, and Chicago. My father's boots, little brass-toed boots, were bought for him by his daddy in Chicago. So, their lifestyle was pretty unusual.

Renner: Which railhead did he use? Did he go to Pilot Point to load his cattle?

Gray: Well, see, the train came through at Sanger in 1886, so he shipped out of here. But before that, he had cattle drives. They went through Arkansas. I talked with a cousin about ten years ago, and she said her father worked for Grandpa and went on one of the cattle drives through Arkansas. See, he didn't come over the Chisholm Trail; he would go through Arkansas. She said that Grandpa had her father, who was his nephew, at the head as a kind of lead man. My grandfather was always the follow-up on the drives. That was before they were shipping. People harassed them, trying to get money, as

they went through with their cattle. They would claim damage, rights, first thing, and that. She said that her father told her that Grandpa always said, "Now, if people start accosting you and asking you for money, even beg for money, you come immediately and get me and let me do all the arbitrating or whatever has to be done." She remembered about that drive.

But my father told of going up on the train. They would go up in the caboose and go to Kansas City, and, then, of course, the commission company would buy their ticket home. The commission company that bought their cattle always gave them a return ticket home on the train. That was customary.

But I don't think Papa...I think the first time he went with cattle, he was eleven. They had moved to Sanger by then, to town. Okay, [here] were the hired men who worked for Grandpa. For ten or twelve years, these were the men that didn't leave him. They worked for him for ten or twelve years. Sam Culwell, Alec Johnson, Jim Williams...he later became a big rancher up in Henrietta. He was in love with

one of my aunts. Lem Tyson. Sam Culwell carried two butchered hogs to Mrs. McIntyre, the widow who was a sister of Eli Eckerson. Those are things of Grandpapa's.

Renner: There was a Tyson, who was one of the cowboys?

Gray: Yes. They had a Russian sheep dog, and in the picture of the family, it looks like it has tight, black wool. Papa said his name was "Moscow." I said, "Papa, Grandpa had his hand on this great, big, black dog." He said, "Oh, yes, he used it for cattle." It was called a sheep dog, but he used it for cattle. It was a Russian dog, and he named it "Moscow." Now, I thought he was pretty smart to know that Moscow is in Russia.

They also had a dog he called "Colie," which was black. He told me this, too. I said, "Tell me. What kept your ears from being frostbitten?" because he wore a hat, a Stetson, always. He said, "I wore a nuibia [pronounced "nouby" by local residents]. My mother bought us the woolen material and made us the nuibias. I said, "What do you mean, 'nouby?' How do you spell it?" He said, "Oh, I don't know." Well,

of course, it was nuibia, the nuibia sheep, you know. He said that the material was so thin, yet it was woolen. The hat would stay down on it, and he wore it and tied it under his chin. It was made from the nuibia sheep wool. He said, "I rode ten miles to the fence on our ranch, and when I came back, the horse had icicles on his nose." I had read J. Frank Dobie's article to him that day. He took the *Fort Worth Star-Telegram*, of course. He could read as good as anybody, but if he wanted me to share it with him, I read it to him. J. Frank Dobie told about seeing a horse that had icicles on it because the weather was so cold. Papa said, "My horse had icicles once, too," when he rode ten miles of fence. That is a lot for a kid of twelve or thirteen years old to do.

He said that he got a filly that his father gave him at six. It was given to him, and her name was "Dixie." My grandfather had fought for the South. So, he had three horses, one right after the other, all named "Dixie." I don't know what age he was when he quit naming them that; and I am sure my grandfather did it.

He said, too, that he had a "steel dust." That today is a quarter horse, but Papa still called it a "steel dust." He said there was a bay and a brown and a sorrel horse. He said, "Today these are known as quarter horses, but in my day as a young man, they were called a "steel dust." He said, "If the eyes are set close together, the horse is mean. A broad head and the eyes far apart means that it is a smart, fine horse."

He said, "I had an old gray horse named 'Bob' when I was five years old, and I could cut cattle with him." He said, "I got lost on the Isle du Bois Creek, and the Big Elm, and I finally made my way in. My father told me to always watch the willows and how they blow to get your directions." He said the brush and the thicket were about one mile and that he came into the place where Clark Newton later lived, in the glades. He said, "Then I knew where I was," when he came through the glades. I wonder what glades were. Marshy areas?

Renner: I wonder where that was. That was Clark Newton?

Gray: Yes. He said that when the hired man came in

with frostbitten feet, my grandmother, his mother, would have them put their feet in cold water. She would have them get off their boots and socks, and she would sometimes have them wade in the snow before they would put their feet in water. Then she would gradually let them come to the fire and get warm. She knew how to take care of them.

Sam Culwell worked for dad twenty years. He came from one of the Carolinas. He was an old bachelor, and later he went to the Indian Territory. J. P. Williams left in 1881. He worked for twenty years for my grandfather. He came from Missouri before they had barbed wire fences, and he was a ranch boss when there were 1,000 cows.

As I said, Grandfather always kept the offspring of his cows until they were three years old. He never sold anything under three years. That was in 1870s and 1880s, south of where ____ Morrow lives now. There is a big arbor there. Methodist and Baptist people would put up tents for their meetings. He said, "We stayed at home. It was only a mile away, and

our house was open house to the ministers of all denominations." He said he would hook up a span of mules to the wagon and load everything and go hear a ____ preacher. Others would be in buggies. He said there was a little red-headed Methodist preacher and a Christian preacher, and they had a fight at the meeting.

[These] are some notes that I took when was talking, expressions of my father's. I have a whole lot of them, and some of them you couldn't repeat, things that he said. He liked for you to listen.

[Here] is Dr. Sullivan in 1956, and [this] is when he died here in Sanger. He practiced medicine here and delivered in his lifetime 3,500 babies.

[This] is Charles Lee, who came out east of town. That was his great-grandfather, too. [Here] is my aunt in Pilot Point, Papa's sister, at eighty-nine. She refuses to live in the past.

Renner: She remembers Indians. These are both articles in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*?

Gray: Yes. [Here] is my grandfather's house that

burned. This just killed me to have that in the paper.

Renner: Oh, there is a picture of the house burning. There really is smoke is pouring out of the second story and destroyed the roof pretty well. I was looking for the date.

Gray: Lets see when that was. We came back and lived here in 1969, so that was in about 1972 or 1973. They had given me the door before that time, and I am certainly grateful for that.

Renner: It was on Sixth and Plum. There is also an article in here on removal permits available for the Jack E. Davis Cemetery, the Lake Aubrey project.

Gray: You don't mean it that has been going on that long.

Renner: Yes, it sure has. That's a sad picture of the house burning.

Gray: I saw it. They tried to get the water from [down here], but they couldn't. They tried three fire hydrants that would not work. If they had been able to get water up in there, they could have saved both of the houses. It was a big house. There was the east bedroom and

living room, and it was a four-bedroom house with a full living room and dining room, big halls.

Renner: And it was built, you said, when your father was eleven.

Gray: Yes, in 1886 and 1887. It was a good house. They bought lots of lumber from a Jefferson plantation. Then various members of the family would go out and live in that house. In fact, Mama and Papa married in 1898, and on their wedding night, they came from Denton, where they were married at my grandparents' home. They came down there and stayed with Papa's sister and her husband at the home place, as they called that.

I describe it in my book. The house had carved doors. They had grapes, grape leaves, and serpents. The man who built it, Mr. McGuire--I talk about him in the book--did the carvings on the doors. He worked on them at night. They were big double-doors. It really was a fine house.

I am glad my father didn't live to see the lake. He didn't know it was going to be built or

anything, and I am glad he didn't live to see it. Because that was his youth, and that was where he lived in the lap of luxury (chuckle).

Renner: They put his life underwater.

Gray: Somebody from Slidell said she saw various things that had been dug up over there. They had them on exhibit, and they had the brown tea leaf pottery. My grandmother...I ate from dishes like that, and my mother told me they were her everyday dishes. She got her good china on my grandfather's trips to Saint Louis and Kansas City.

Renner: You said her everyday china came from Pilot Point?

Gray: Yes. I concluded that some merchant in Pilot Point probably got it in by the carloads, and probably all of those people out in there had that brown tea leaf pottery. It is a collector's item today. My sister-in-law in Dallas collected it. My cousin, who went to Europe with me in September, she has the platter of that brown tea leaf that came out of that house. She has it in Fort Worth. I said, "Why don't you bring it up and let me display it in

the local history case at the library" She said, "Maybe I will." She is scared I won't give it back to her or something. It is a beautiful pattern.

Renner: What other kinds of things did they buy in Pilot Point when they went to town? What did they do when they went to town?

Gray: See, I hadn't talked to you about my mother's people. My mother's father founded the *Pilot Point Post-Signal*, the newspaper that is still being published. [That] chair was bought in Pilot Point by the editor of the paper in 1873. So, they have gone in there and could get good furniture. My marble-top dresser came from Pilot Point, but that is the other side of my house. My grandfather's desk is [in there]. It is not so terribly attractive. It looks like a post office, I guess. Come look at it. My aunt up in Ardmore said that his daughters bought it for him in the 1890s. They had to keep his records in it. To me it always looked like a little post office. He had all his ledgers and so forth in there.

Renner: It is a drop-down and then the pigeonholes.

Even when the drop is up, it is still a table.
It still is a desk.

Gray: Now, [this] is my mothers family's home in Denton. They moved from Pilot Point to Denton.

Renner: That is an attractive, symmetric, two-story house. The chimney is in the middle of this house instead of at the end.

Gray: It had three bedrooms upstairs and one down, a bath upstairs and one down. [This] is the living room. The dining room and kitchen went back from the master bedroom.

Renner: So, your mother came from Denton, and your father...

Gray: Well, she was born in Pilot Point--my mother was--when her father was editor of the paper. I guess you know about the Isle of Man in the Irish Sea. My mother's family were descended from William Christian. I have been there twice to the Isle of Man.

See, I just heard a lot all my life. I guess I have told you that I am going to be written up Wednesday in the *Denton Record-Chronicle*. There's no telling what they are going to say.

Renner: You told me there is an article.

Gray: She asked me why I liked history and why I wrote history. I told her that I thought everybody liked history.

Renner: Me, too. You were raised in town, then?

Gray: Yes.

Renner: You were raised in Sanger?

Gray: Well, see, my parents were out in New Mexico claiming land, and I was born out there on a farm. I think they went out in a Pullman and practically walked back. They sold their land, but they never got paid for it after five years of hardship, so I was three when we came to Denton. I lived with my mother and father at my grandparents' home in Denton. The chiropractic clinic is there now, the brick chiropractic clinic on West Hickory about halfway between the courthouse and the college. So, I lived there until I was in the fourth grade. My father had cattle out here on the Wilkins Ranch, and they had a thousand-acre pasture out there in Green Valley.

He had cattle there, so we moved to Sanger, and, of course, my parents had lived here. Both

of my brothers were born here, so it was coming back home for them. But I had never lived here. I lived in Denton. So, my mother taught school here. She taught history and was the principal of grammar school. My father was always in the cattle business.

Then I went to college in 1925 and got my bachelor's at Texas Womans University, and then I got my master's at SMU [Southern Methodist University]. I taught here at the high school, taught English and journalism, for two years while my husband was overseas. Then I taught in some smaller Texas towns. I taught history fifteen years at Highland Park in Dallas and retired from there.

My husband and I moved back here. My husband was in the oil business, so we traveled over the central part of the United States. He drilled in Kentucky on rigs. He would go up and work up a block of leases and then move the rigs in, and then they would drill. He was what you would call an independent oilman. So, I have had a very interesting life, because I got to live in Mississippi, Kentucky, Oklahoma,

Arkansas, Indiana, and Illinois. But always we had a residence in Dallas, in University Park, Dallas.

Renner: You watched the oil business come into this part of the country then.

Gray: Yes.

Renner: How did that affect...

Gray: You know, we were out in California when the Bolivar boom was on, so we were really not affected here. But even after he died, we drilled two wells--one west of Pilot Point and one at Gunter--after he died. He had blocked the acreage and made the deals, and so we carried through on the contracts--his partners and I. I know all about the oil business. Except I can't say what's wrong, and I can't understand why we are bringing in oil from Iran while are over there having trouble with Iran. I cannot understand all of that with independents taking bankruptcy right here and going broke. Of course, you can't pay \$800 a month in electric bills to pump wells when oil is down to \$10 a barrel. I can figure all of that out. My oil interests are royalties, and

the wells that I am interested in aren't pumping. Of course, you can't afford to pump when the price of oil is back down.

Renner: Let alone the cost of exploration and dry holes. It costs the same to drill a dry hole as it does a productive one.

Gray: Of course, setting it in pipe...if you have a dry hole, you will know it pretty soon, and you won't set pipe on it. My husband made four fortunes in the oil business, so I got to enjoy some good times.

Renner: How were neighbors in general affected by oil in this part of the country? You were right in the middle of it, but I gather most people here had a well or two in the pasture?

Gray: Oh, you mean out at Bolivar?

Renner: Out in the area, neighbors out in the area?

Gray: Look at Flow Memorial Hospital [in Denton]. One woman from Sanger gave Flow a half-million dollars. The oil was produced on her holdings out here at Bolivar. So, people in Sanger--not very many of them--have been in the oil business, but everybody has been affected a little bit by it. But the Bolivar boom made a

lot of people rich. Only a few of the wells are being pumped now.

Renner: I don't see it on this map. When was that?

Gray: In 1936 and 1937, I believe.

Renner: In the early- and mid-1930s, even Reason Jones had oil wells.

Gray: Oh, yes. I can tell you a whole lot about that. My father was one of the heirs, and they never got their settlement out of that. A suit was filed against them, but the lawyer died, so the Jacobs family got everything that was left. Let's just put it that way.

Renner: Even Roy Jones had a couple of wells on his place.

Gray: Yes. I am kin to him.

Renner: Second cousins, would it be?

Gray: He would be my father's first cousin. He is ninety-two. Somebody just told me that the other day.

Renner: I spent a lot of time with him.

Gray: He lives next door to my cousin's widow, Estelle Whitley. She told me that Roy lives next door to her.

Renner: I have forgotten the street name, but I have

been to his house. We have driven all over the area with him.

Gray: He should know that. He is a real nice fellow. My father thought a lot of him. I guess he and Papa were first cousins, but I am not sure. They might have been second cousins. You take a family with twenty-two children...Reason Jones had eleven by each marriage--nine sons and two daughters and then the nine daughters and two sons.

Renner: I wanted to ask about the Depression, too. How did the Depression affect the area?

Gray: I have thought a lot about the Depression in a town like Sanger, where my parents lived. They had a garden; they had fruit trees; and they had chickens, eggs. They could buy milk cheap from their neighbors. I remember a family that delivered milk to us, and I have come to the conclusion that if there is a depression, live in a town where you can grow things. If you are up on the fifth floor of an apartment house, you can't grow anything.

Renner: We were talking awhile ago that the country has pretty self-sufficient people, so the area

didn't really suffer that badly from the Depression.

Gray: I don't think as much as cities did. Here in Sanger we had two doctors, who had been here all of their lives. Well, of course, Dr. Rice came here to practice, but he'd practiced here all of his adult practice. Then my cousin, John Sullivan, never did practice anywhere else. They took care of people who were sick, and they paid them as they could. I decided that in the Depression, even though it was very disheartening not to be able to have the clothing you wanted, really, you suffered less in a small town than you did anywhere else.

Renner: Did many people lose their land?

Gray: Oh, yes! The farmers, yes, many of them lost their land. Now, my parents lived on the property that joins [this] at the back. They had a big garden and an orchard. [This] was part of it. The barn was where this house is, and they were able to be self-sufficient, more or less.

Renner: Did a lot of people leave the area during the Depression?

Gray: I am sure they did. They went other places to get work. We were down in East Texas. That was the oil boom.

We married in 1932, and he drilled down there. So, we saw good times down there. There was a lot of "hot" oil, a lot of things that independents could get rich on, so times were not so hard. But I believe in an agricultural area you can stand a depression better than you can in a city or factory area where you don't have a garden. That is just my opinion of the Depression. I didn't like it, you understand, and I don't want any more, but I am telling you, the way the stock market has been acting, I don't think that it is unlikely that we might have another depression. I understand now, in financing houses, they have it fixed where you pay nothing on the principal for the first five years. Therefore, you have no equity, and, you know, equity in something is what has saved people's hides in the past. But, a lot of people east of town lost their homes.

[Tape ends abruptly]