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**Interview with  
JANE ARMSTRONG  
August 20, 1987**

**Place of Interview: Scott Jacobs Farm**

**Interviewer: Steve Renner  
Kate Singleton**

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Oral History Collection

Jane Armstrong

Interviewers: Steve Renner; August 20, 1987  
Kate Singleton

Place of Interview: Scott Jacobs Farm, Site 41C0111

Renner: We are visiting with Ms. Jane Armstrong at the Scott Jacobs farm. We are looking at the original well on this property. Ms. Armstrong tells me that it was in 1886 when...this was your grandfather whom we're talking about?

Armstrong: He was my great-grandfather.

Renner: He tried a number of times to locate water on the place and kept going to fifty feet. He finally went to sixty feet one time and found water. The original well is by the barn, close to the road, and is about a five-foot-square area covered with rocks. Was it stone-lined?

Armstrong: I don't know. I have never had the nerve to do much digging around the well. As you can tell, I haven't even pulled the trash off of the well yet.

Renner: How long did they use that well?

Armstrong: I guess they used the well...this well [over here] was drilled sometime in the 1930s, so I guess it was used until then. This one was machine-drilled, where the windmill is, and then one was hand-dug.

Renner: Yes, hand-dug and used for fifty years. I have heard the water in this area was real good.

Armstrong: It was good. It had gypsum in it. If you tried to water the garden, it kind of would ruin the soil. But for drinking water, it was good water. Of course, back in those days, it wasn't treated with anything, either. It really made a difference.

Renner: It was real water. When did your great-grandfather move in here?

Armstrong: He came through here...he had gone out to the gold fields in California from Missouri, and he came back through Panama.

That was before the Panama Canal was built. He came back up through Texas and rode through [here] and spotted a place south of [here] about a mile that he liked. He found the owner, and the owner would not sell. His name was Strickland.

The year 1861 was when he moved the family down here. They lived just south of here, probably not a fourth-of-a-mile, because the spring was close down there. In other words, he got just as close to Strickland's property as he could to live temporarily because of the spring.

Renner: And water determined where he went...

Armstrong: Yes, where he located...where they were living. But then in 1854...what I have read in a book at the library in Denton, it says the house was built in 1854. Now when they started it, I am not sure. I cannot feature them building it in one year, not with what they had to go through to build it. I assume they moved in in 1854. It was quite a large family.

Renner: They all came from Missouri?

Armstrong: I haven't counted up exactly how many of them moved from Missouri. They had one child who died in Missouri as an infant. All of the others were living when they moved here or were born after they moved here. He fathered twenty-three children.

Renner: Twenty-three children!

Armstrong: He was married twice.

Renner: As we look south across the bottom there, that was all his land?

Armstrong: Yes, when Strickland died he bought Strickland's place, and it went south to \_\_\_\_\_. I assume that back in those days there weren't many trees because it says in that book that he could sit on his porch and see a hog anywhere on the place. So, there must not have been any trees back then. But you can see with the lay of it how it could be possible because it slopes down here. They did build a house up [here] before he did find water, so he hauled the water buckets by oxen up here.

Renner: When did he build up here?

Armstrong: In 1854. The logs were hewed by Uncle

Johnny Johnson--no relation. I guess he just went by "Uncle Johnny." He was buried in the Jones Cemetery. They said he was a seller from Arkansas.

Renner: We have learned the Johnson family was just about the original people here. There is a cabin site over on Mr. Roy Jones's place, where they called Arkansas Hill. It's between Mr. Jones's house and Arkansas Hill. The well, the flowing well, is over [there]. It is right there by the well.

Armstrong: That is possible--where he came from--it being this close.

Renner: How did your people get here from Missouri?

Armstrong: I assume they came by wagon. In 1861 that would be about the only way they could--a one-family wagon train with that many kids. We found that no one knows...Roy Jones's family obviously came at the same time. Then there was the Montgomery family. When these people left Tennessee and went to Missouri, they all moved at the same time. Reason Jones's first wife was a Montgomery, and seemed like they just kind of moved



together everywhere they went. There were a lot of marriages through the families. It looked like they all pulled up stakes and left.

This man's mother, my great-great-grandmother came, also. She married a man named Burton. I don't know if you are familiar with the Sanders family here, but they came from the Burton family. So, they are related.

Supposedly, Reason Jones was illegitimate. He was born in 1803, and everything we can find says he was illegitimate. I can't imagine having an illegitimate child in 1803. He was illiterate, which I don't guess was unusual for that time. I don't know much about his mother other than the fact that she did marry and had four children. She is buried, also, in Jones Cemetery. I just don't know a lot about her. She was supposedly born in 1879, but we are not sure where.

It did seem that they moved in family

groups. I am not sure if any of them moved to Missouri. He married in Missouri. The reason I am more familiar with the Montgomery family is that when we got hold of a book a woman in Oklahoma was putting together, my aunt that lived down here spotted my husband's aunt's name in it. I knew he was a Montgomery, so we got on this tracking back and tracking back. This man's first wife was my husband's great-great-great-aunt. She had been a Montgomery--small world.

There was a case of one of these Jones girls marrying a Montgomery--first cousins. They are buried in Bloomfield Cemetery. I guess their grandson is probably the last of the Montgomerys right around this area. There's a Roy Montgomery, who is a Methodist preacher. He was raised seven miles from [here], and I think he lives in Roanoke [Texas] now. There are not many Montgomerys left. There are many Jones left around here.

Renner: Their name is on the land everywhere.

Armstrong: My aunt and uncle, who lived south of here, were fourth cousins. She was a Jones, related to Roy Jones on that side; and my uncle was a Jones from this side.

Renner: Did any of your people live north of [here], or were you pretty well from [here] south?

Armstrong: I don't know how far this land extended.

Renner: Is this farmstead about in the center of your family home?

Armstrong: Probably a little north of center. Reason Jones owned the Strickland Survey and the Caldwell Survey. There was a \_\_\_\_\_ Burton, which is who his mother married. There was a Sanders Survey. I don't know if at one time he owned all of this or how much property he did own at one time. When he died the land...of course, it was divided up among the children. A lot of it gradually came back in. My grandfather, Clint Jacobs, bought most of the land back. My grandmother's brother bought a lot of it back. His name was Jim Jones, from that first bunch. There was a survey, and oil

was discovered on the land, and a lot of them came back upset that they didn't have any mineral rights. It was gradually bought back from heirs, and I guess my grandfather probably got...in this area about 700-800 acres. Of course, when he died it was split up again.

Renner: It was right in this area?

Armstrong: He had some land on Arkansas Hill and some closer. This place ended up being split up four ways.

Renner: Let's stroll [up here] and look at the old houses.

Armstrong: We had mowed out here earlier. When you called the other day, we came out here and mowed the lot.

Renner: [This] is sturdy. What did you used to keep in [here]?

Armstrong: My grandfather built all of this as a cow lot. As you can see over [here] is the chute where he worked the cattle and all, and over [here] you see a milk shed. It was set up to run the cows in to milk. It had pretty well fallen down, so we started

ripping it apart.

Renner: I see some recycled material [here] that the beam up top there is notched for joists or something. That is a beam out of an old structure somewhere.

Armstrong: I assume this one lying down [here] was about the same size. That was quite a large log up there. Of course, we haven't discussed how we will get it down. This tree supposedly was [here] for as long as my great-grandmother can remember, so it is quite an old tree. I have no idea what kind it is. You can see by the trunk...

Renner: It has been there for a while.

Armstrong: It's hollow on one side, and there is also an oak tree just south of [here] that was [here] when she came [here]. She came in 1860--the second wife, my great-grandmother--and she said it was large tree when she came.

Renner: You knew her?

Armstrong: No, I didn't know her. Of course, my father remembers her well. My aunt and my mother knew her quite well. She died in 1928, so

they knew her quite well and had sense enough to listen to a few of the things she said. She lived with her kids, like they used to do. When she gave up housekeeping, as they called it, she lived from kid to kid to kid. She spent most of her time up [here], but different times she would go visit some relative around [here]. She was here when my mother...my father went up to Chicago for about six months and went to school. Mother had breakfast with her every morning and heard a lot of stories. They're like me. They regret they didn't listen more and pried more out of her.

She came here in a odd way. The wagon train...she was from Virginia, and why they came through here, I don't know if it was weather or what, but they stopped here to stay for a while. They were supposed to be on their way to Oregon, and she was alone. I don't understand that, but I guess that he needed a wife and mother, so she stayed here. She is known to most people in Pilot Point [Texas] as "Aunt Mirandy," because

she is stepmother to so many kids. Her name was Miranda. Our family knows her as "Granny Jones." She is the one they found buried with the pistol in Jones Cemetery when they dug her up. She wasn't the type to have one. It is a real mystery why Ms. Strickland had that in her grave, because she was definitely not the type from what we know from all the people that knew her. They all said, "No way!"

Renner: What was it before it was a barn?

Armstrong: It was a house. It was a dogtrot completely through the middle. [Up in here] you can see the pegs that held the second story. I think [this] floor has given way, and I'm not sure about [this one]. I haven't been out here for a while. The barn has been \_\_\_\_\_ since early 1930s, I guess. They originally started out as forerunners, and a lot of it in this area \_\_\_\_\_. I don't know if this is original or not; I don't have any idea. It looks a little too much like cement to me.

Renner: And [this] was built when?

Armstrong: In 1854.

Renner: This was built by...?

Armstrong: The logs were hewed by Johnny Johnson, and Reason Jones was the one who built the house. You can see where we have tried to shore up the cracks on the second floor. This is the back of it [here].

Renner: Even though the barn extends north with a lean-to-like structure, it looks like at one time it did have an original porch.

Armstrong: Yes, [this] was considered the back of the house because the road did go on the other side.

Renner: Who all lived here?

Armstrong: Reason Jones and his family, and between 1905 and 1910, my grandparents, and Reason Jones's youngest daughter, Sally, moved up here with my father. That's a big family argument as to how many of the boys were born in this house. I know my aunt was born in this house. They moved here to live with her--Reason Jones's widow--and they lived here until 1920. So, really only two families lived here--Reason Jones



and his daughter, after she married. They reared a lot of kids here.

Renner: Did it become a barn then?

Armstrong: When they moved out of it, my grandfather used it as a barn, and then when he got the little bit of oil money, he built this barn around it. I don't know why. It didn't really make much more room other than the fact that he had a little bit of preservation in his soul.

Renner: He preserved it?

Armstrong: We kept a roof on it except for short periods when some of the boards were ripped off. It takes a lot of nerve to get on top of this thing; it has quite a slope to it, as you can see.

Renner: Was it built originally on this site?

Armstrong: Yes. I understand that it was called a dovetail joint.

Renner: That's a neat square corner.

Armstrong: It's probably just blown over and just low...

Renner: You would have to unstack it.

Armstrong: I would assume so.

Renner: Is this a cement foundation?

Armstrong: I assume he has filled in with it, around it. It couldn't have been to start with...my father said that there were some small rocks that washed away, and they came in and kind of filled in around. Some of it is still rock.

Renner: A rock foundation.

Armstrong: Then there has been some holes cut in. It hasn't always been leaning on [this side]. It didn't have too much preservation. When you start whittling on something like this, it isn't functional. It's like [this door over here]. It was cut in. [Right here] you can see an opening. There were bins [over there] for wheat or whatever, and it fell from outside on this bin. We were forbidden to play in them, but we did until we would see a snake. Then we would stay away for a while and then forget about it and come back.

I have been [in here] on days when you could get a good breeze through [here] most of the time. It was built with the

dogtrot.

Renner: The dogtrot on the north/south to get that summer breeze?

Armstrong: I don't know when they added [this kitchen] on.

Renner: This is the auger that you talked about? This was run under a grain bin, and it augured grain out or in for feed for the cattle?

Armstrong: Yes.

Renner: Was it tractor-driven?

Armstrong: Yes. This family was very inventive in general. I assume that the rocks were the original steps. If and when I ever get my house built, [this one and this one] are going to be used.

Renner: Yes, those are shaped, worked rock. [This] was added on?

Armstrong: [This] was added on as a kitchen.

Renner: It seems as if [this] door has been nailed shut.

Armstrong: No, I don't think it has been nailed shut. It's dragging down there. Anyway, it was used in later years as a tack barn for

horses. My grandfather's saddle is still in there.

Renner: There still is equipment [in here].

Armstrong: This right [here] is just one of our piles of rubbish. Everytime you start shredding anything, you find more things. We found things [in here]. We haven't turned anything over in a long time.

Renner: There are a lot of sprockets, ladder chains, and ladder chain sprockets. It looks like some levers, some spring mechanisms. There's also a harness, wagon chains and rings. It's an assortment of horse-drawn farm equipment. Harness gear is what it appears to be.

[Tape 1, Side 2]

Renner: The kitchen was added in what year? Do you know?

Armstrong: I don't know when the kitchen was added. I assume that with the heat factor and all, it was probably a bigger place than the kitchen.

Renner: But it has been there since...the house hasn't been lived in as a dwelling since

1920? It was definitely before 1920?

Armstrong: Yes. [This right here] used to have boards across it--this lot. About the time we painted, it was when the boards started falling off. We got it all painted, and then the boards started to rot off.

Renner: This is an incredibly sturdy pen.

Armstrong: My grandfather was known for raising ewes. He did a lot of trading in ewes. [This] was bound to have been built in the 1930s because of the pipe that was used. A lot of drilling for oil wells was going on, and I am quite sure that he had found some of the pipe, and that is why it was such large pipe.

Renner: It was the use of material that was available.

Armstrong: There is a horseshoe print. It was built in April 12, 1937. That is probably when this fence was built around the lot.

Renner: It has decorative horseshoe prints.

Armstrong: Somewhere on [here] it has "Jacobs Farms." There's a fence across [here], but I don't know if it was built the same time. It had

to have been in place because of the pipe they used. About then was when the drilling was beginning to slow down some.

Renner: Drilling in this area started in the 1920s?

Armstrong: The well was discovered on this place, I guess, in 1929 or 1930--a discovery well. This place has been here before the Railroad Commission and all the restrictions. We laugh about having pavement. In the summertime it's soft, and in the wintertime it is just like a highway.

Renner: It's not quite tar.

Armstrong: [This] was built as more of a machinery shed. I have always called it the machinery shed.

Renner: It is more due south of the log house and barn.

Armstrong: While we are here, this road you can see coming up from this dirt road, that is existing now, you can see that the low place that angles off to [there]. The original road did come by here. My mother said as a child she used to remember...she

lived in the Bloomfield area, down here in what they called Terrapin Neck. They would come through going visiting somewhere, and she said she remembers coming through here angry at the Jacobs boys because they always had toys. The road did pass in front of the house, and I guess my grandfather had it routed around. I always remember it behind that fence.

Supposedly, [this] is not the original post. Now it is an iron post. My great-grandmother kept a horse tied to it because of Indians. Not that there were many Indians in this area, but I think enough showed up occasionally that she had a horse tied up there when my great-grandfather was not on the place. I don't know how she was going to load all those kids on one horse, but that is how the story goes.

Renner: That was her getaway.

Armstrong: That story came from her. She kept a horse tied up, and she did keep a rifle handy. But as far as I know, there were never any Indian scares. There was one book that

came out of Montague County that quoted something about a Jones family with a bunch of girls, which, among the first eleven, kids there were a lot of girls. They dressed like men because of the Indians in the area. They all made an appearance dressed like men. But I don't think that Indians followed them much around here.

[This] shed was probably built at the same time [this] barn was built, in the early 1930s. I guess when machinery became more motorized, he felt a need to put it in. He threshed. He had a thresher and went all over the country threshing. His threshing crews had a cookhouse. I remember it real well. The sides let down. All that is left of it is an old truck body. It sits close to Pilot Point.

Renner: Horse-drawn or steam?

Armstrong: It was motorized. It was in [here]. The thresher was really a big decision--what to do with this thresher. So, we called the Cooke County Museum, and like a lot things out here, so many parts have been robbed



off of it to make other things. It was considered of no value, so we cut it up. It was inside the shed. But they had a pretty neat cattle feeding operation here.

Renner: There are pile of plows [here]--horse-drawn plows.

Armstrong: We had a plow here two years ago. It was not our plow, but the man it belonged to never did come get it, either. By the time we discovered it, it was too late to go in there and get it.

Renner: Where did the material come from? The wood?

Armstrong: I assume this material probably came out of Pilot Point--lumberyards. My father was always on the place until we left in 1944. I tried to get him to tell me things, and he just couldn't remember, mainly because he never went to town to see things that were bought. He was the oldest of all of them. People to the day in this town don't remember ever seeing him because he got stuck with staying on the place while everybody went to town. He wasn't a

recluse. He just didn't have much choice. He was the oldest and took more responsibility, I guess. I think the family built [this]. There was no outside help on it.

Renner: It originally was built with \_\_\_\_\_.

Armstrong: Yes, you can see how they notched it.

Renner: It looks like you reset it.

Armstrong: The locust tree grew into it. I don't know, but if you cut the tree down, the barn will go with it. It was lying down on the pen, and I had [that] cut away. A lot of this just fell [here] not long ago.

Renner: Was it built originally with the tin roof on it?

Armstrong: Yes.

Renner: Same as the barn?

Armstrong: Yes. In fact, I would probably wager that this is the original tin, at least some of it. Now, we have had to replace some pieces. Where they go, I don't know. They rip completely off.

Renner: Never see them again?

Armstrong: No. We used to spend a lot of time down in

the bottom, and we never saw any tin down there. Occasionally, it would tear, and these things would rip off. Some of it is new, but the majority of it is original tin. We haven't replaced too awfully many pieces over the years.

Renner: Is there anything in the shed now?

Armstrong: All that is in there now is our tractor. At one time [over there] where the shed is, where we were standing [over there] awhile ago, there was a blacksmith shop with the garage. That was where the garage was.

Renner: Is that a grinding wheel [over there]?

Armstrong: Yes, that is a grinding wheel. That was on this place. All the wood structure was just lying down around it. I don't know exactly what [this] is.

Renner: It's a vice.

Armstrong: We had a quite large anvil. I don't think anyone has stolen it.

Renner: There is a horse-drawn...

Armstrong: They may have hidden this bellows thing. We have had so many people, just curiosity people, come by that he may have put it

away somewhere. There is the hand-cranked thing...kind of like a bellows. It was like a blacksmith operation.

Renner: Was it similar, say, to a modern day barbecue pit?

Armstrong: No, the whole blacksmith shop was like what you would see in movies--the old western movies. I think that everyone around here looked like the old blacksmith. Most of this [here] is just junk. This is our wintertime project--cleaning this out.

Renner: This is a sturdy building. It is in good shape.

Armstrong: Well, yes. We've had discussions about whether to tear it down and start all over or what. These doors were very...up until not long ago, this whole door had a spring latch. [This spring] keeps the door from blowing from the south, and [this one] keeps the door from blowing from the north. There are a lot of doors on this building. There are two doors at the back, a walk-in door and a drive-in door, in the back. When I was a kid, this was a new building.

I was born in 1937. To me and to everybody, this was a new building. Once again, there is some of the pipe from the oil field. This building is pretty well the original. Talk about how weather dries! Look at the holes [back here].

Renner: You can see the sunlight through the wall and the doors. It is interesting how the doors have weathered more than the walls have.

Armstrong: On the north side, they aren't as bad as that. I don't know of a piece of tin ever coming off of [this]. The way they bolted it on, I don't know how it would ever had much of a chance.

Renner: Let's see what we have [out here].

Armstrong: Our property line goes--they were kind enough--to the corner of [this] shed and around the barn and the old house and cuts back. [This] is a manure spreader. How old it is, I don't know.

Renner: It's a horse-drawn manure spreader. What was it that your uncle called it?

Armstrong: \_\_\_\_\_. He had a lot of funny names

for things. I assume it was probably home-built. I don't think that it was store-bought.

Renner: The actual turning of the wheels is what drove the mechanism through a ladder chain and sprocket.

Armstrong: [This] is one of the things we want to put in the shed when we get it cleaned out. I don't know if it had rubber wheels. I would say it did, but it may not have. The tractor that was out here...I can't remember. I think it was a McCormick tractor--the first tractor that the family ever bought. It set right out [here]. They pulled it up from the field back [in here]. It had been [back there] ever since, I guess, they bought a new tractor. We pulled it up, and naturally we pulled it too far. We were going to have to move it, anyway, and since this new club in Lindsey [Texas] started, they were destroying all the farm equipment. We had two people who, all of a sudden, wanted it. My mother has this fondness for the kid who mows this

yard, and his father was one of them who wanted it, so we just gave it to him. He has it in his barn now.

Renner: Does it have metal wheels?

Armstrong: Yes, it has the old metal wheels. I would assume the man had to be an extremely long-legged man to run one. My mother said she tried to drive it one day. She took my father's lunch down to him, and she said the first thing she did was drive it through the fence. She said it took a strong man to work one of them.

Renner: It does look homemade.

Armstrong: Yes. I am quite sure that they bought a lot of things to go on it and all...

Renner: It's made of angle iron, and it is riveted together.

Armstrong: Most things like this, they tried to structure themselves. That's why they probably used the blacksmith shop.

Renner: [This] is interesting. It is not welded; it's all bolted and riveted together. I have not seen any welding on it.

[There is about 30 seconds of blank tape.]

Renner: This is the old schoolhouse?

Armstrong: This main part has been added on after they moved it up here. Dad said they moved it piece by piece, and he poured a concrete foundation, and they just put it back together.

Renner: It looks...

Armstrong: It had a description of it, also, in this book of Fort Worth. It had had some carving done on it. You can't see it [back here], over where the fireplace is, but on the south side there has been a window cut in.

Renner: Where was it originally?

Armstrong: It was about three-quarters of mile down in the bottom. We found the well down there. Down there is where Dad said they moved it from. He wasn't aware the well was that close to it.

Renner: That was south of here?

Armstrong: No, it was north.

Renner: When was it moved?

Armstrong: Oh, my dad wasn't sure. He thought it was moved in the late 1920s or early 1930s,



because he was already married. It was probably before my brother was born in 1936.

Renner: It seems to have been a building phase around here in the late 1920s or early 1930s.

Armstrong: Well, he came into a little bit of money--well, quite a lot of money--on the oil on the property.

Renner: That's when the shed and the barn were built.

Armstrong: Yes. He had money to do things with. I understand that in 1932 he had \$30,000 in the bank, which was quite unusual back then in the deep Depression. But eventually he sunk it all back in the ground. He got bit by the "oil bug." He didn't die a poor man, but he was by no means a wealthy man. But since he had that much money, a lot of building did go on, and there was a lot of land buying. That was when he started purchasing land back from the other heirs, also. All but one sold the land back. Andrew Jones was my grandmother's brother.

There is still, I think, a ten-acre square at the corner of these two roads going to the south--[right there] in that corner. He never sold it. He held out. It was never cultivated; it was never fenced off. My grandfather always cultivated around it, because it wasn't his. He bought a lot of the land back then with his oil money.

This house was built in two different stages. I think that Jim Jones, whom I mentioned earlier, built the two back rooms; and then when they got ready to move, my great-grandmother over here, and my grandparents moved here, they added the front two rooms. Uncle \_\_\_\_\_ Jones paid for it. They moved over here in about 1920. Dad said he was about fifteen years old when they moved over here. The kitchen was added in the 1930s, along with the bathroom.

The septic tank--they called it a cesspool--is over on the other side. It always had a severe drainage problem because--you can tell--they dug a trench

away from it and down [that way]. When I was a kid, there were always flowers growing around it. There is a cubbyhole [up in there] that is [back here] at the back that is boarded up. There used to be stairs [back here] that went up to what they called a cubbyhole.

Renner: At the south gable for storage?

Armstrong: It was for storage. My grandmother's sidesaddle was up there and disappeared before I got my hands on it. When we left--when we boarded it up--there was an old dresser and just odds-and-ends up there. The stairs had gotten so dangerous that we just took them down. We were afraid somebody would fall from them. It was painted in 1974, and, kind of like the fence [out here], when we painted it, it didn't glue well. [This] was a screened-in porch.

Renner: I was going to ask you about the old porches.

Armstrong: This porch was screened in and had a wood floor in it. It had a porch swing on this

south end. In the summertime the beds came out, and everybody slept on the screened-in porch. The porch [back here] was screened in. Three of the porches were screened in. [This] room was always where you visited. You see the hooks [there] between the two doors. There was a little shelf that sat there with a mirror and a wash stand, and when they came from outside, they washed up there before they went into the house.

Renner: This is the southeast corner of the house?

Armstrong: Yes. It was very cool because there is a breeze from the south.

Renner: Afternoon shade?

Armstrong: For sleeping, it was great in the days before air conditioning came along. He poured the sidewalks. All of those were poured at the same time that [this out here] was done.

Renner: The same time as the water trough?

Armstrong: Yes. Dad said they built the forms. They were going to be out here with concrete, and they built the forms for the steps. There was a sidewalk that went to the front

of the house until some kid decided to take a hammer to it. It was a little dry anyway. This porch [around here] was more or less...they called it the "kitchen porch."

[Tape 2, Side 1]

Armstrong: In fact, the day he came through here and couldn't find Strickland, he was in Sherman [Texas]. It could have been they trucked it in from Sherman. I never heard Daddy mention anything until later years. My mother and father shopped in Gainesville [Texas]. Pilot Point was where you bought the groceries because it was closer, and it had a store where you would buy your clothing.

Renner: What about your farm machinery?

Armstrong: Most of our farm machinery, the way Dad talked, came out of Fort Worth. There was a farm machinery place in Frisco [Texas]. They bought some of their equipment there. They went to Dallas several times and bought farm machinery. One time we were in Dallas, and Dad said something about it

when we passed an intersection. He said that he used to come [down there] to buy farm machinery. He worked...other farmers around here, if they needed anything, my grandfather always seemed to have a big heart to take somebody to get something or whatever. When they began to use motorized farm machinery, Frisco was where they got parts--John Deere or whatever it was. Sanger [Texas] had one, I assume. No, they didn't, either. Well they might have then. Pilot Point didn't have a place to buy farm machinery. Anyhow, I guess around the late 1930s, my father and a brother-in-law talked about putting in a farm machinery place in Pilot Point. But my grandfather didn't think it would be profitable, and he wouldn't loan them any money, so they didn't open it. Not long after that, someone put one in over in Sanger. There was one in Frisco. I assume Gainesville didn't have one, or they would have bought closer to home.

Renner:

I have heard Pilot Point had a place on the

square. There was one on the east and one on the west--farm implement stores.

Armstrong: I just wondered if that was before they were motorized.

Renner: I believe we are going back and talking about horse and wagons.

Armstrong: Now, I just wonder if it was before motorized equipment. Like, the first tractor, I think, came out of Frisco. Now, the other places, I have no idea about them. It probably was in Pilot Point. You certainly didn't take a team very far to go get something like that.

Electricity was put in this house, I guess, right around the end of the war [by the Rural Electrification Administration]. There used to be a big cabinet that set in [here] that she bought out of one of the houses in Pilot Point. It set up against [this] wall. It had an all-glass front. It was about as long as [this] wall, I guess.

Renner: China cabinet?

Armstrong: It was kind of a china cabinet-type thing,

but it was actually a wall cabinet. It had legs on it, but it was nailed to the wall. It had adjustable shelves. It was all white oak wood.

We're now in the smokehouse. This is where all the ham, sausage, bacon, and everything were smoked. They built fires in it to smoke them. She had a little overhang porch, and this brick was under it.

Renner: We are just immediately southwest, off the corner of the house about ten feet.

Armstrong: Also, I understand she did her washing [right out here].

Renner: [This] wasn't a log structure?

Armstrong: No, it was built about the same time the house was.

Renner: Rocks, weather sheets on the outside, and papered on the inside.

Armstrong: It was really in bad shape. It was almost down when we got here. It was quite a large smokehouse.

I could have easily lived down here in this house--about a story-and-a-half house.



This was a lot larger than our first house. Everything was kind of common back then, too. Our garden was [down there] where the root crops did better. We raised the root crops [up here] on [this] ground. My uncle across the creek from us had ground that was good for corn and a lot of other things. Then everybody got their cut from that.

Renner: Then you raised, like, beans, tomatoes?

Armstrong: We had more like the root crops--carrots, potatoes. The root crops did better down there.

Renner: The beans and tomatoes and everything were raised up here.

Armstrong: Not only the beans and everything. [Back here] was turned into a garden where it one time was the hog pasture.

Renner: Just south of the house.

Armstrong: Well, it where there was a drive-through lane [in here], right behind the cellar. Then there was the garden fence. It was quite a large garden because it had been a hog pasture. She had a garden back in

there. Back then we all worked in the garden.

The cellar was also built with the oil money. Up until about six years ago, it had not crumbled like this. Just all of a sudden, one day...it had steel reinforcements, but I guess the old pipe just rusted.

Renner: It collapsed?

Armstrong: Yes, it collapsed. The walls are loose. There is the sidewalk--what's left of it--that went to the cellar.

Renner: Coming off the southwest porch, the cellar is due south of the center of the house about twenty feet, with the door facing northward.

Armstrong: She kept the garden things there--canned tomatoes, green beans, anything that we raised that we canned.

Renner: Fruits.

Armstrong: Yes. That's where we kept everything--in the dark--before air conditioning. It was supposed to stay pretty cool, and most of the shelves were still down there. I

finally got the nerve to go down there before it caved in. I found some jars. An ice cream freezer was always there. There was room to go if it got stormy. Our storm cellar wasn't as nice as this one. We had a dirt cellar, and I would go through any tornado before I would go in it.

Renner: Was there a cellar [here] before the concrete?

Armstrong: Yes, there was. There is a low spot just west of the old original one [out here], and that was the cellar. My father was born in a house just north of here, and it had a real funny well spring. I guess everybody had a cellar, and it was mainly where you stored your food. It came in handy for storms, but I don't know if they were really built for storms or for food storage. Your potatoes and onions were stored under the house. Most cellars were big enough to store on the floor, so you stored under the house. You cleaned the ground off good and layered them where they didn't touch each other. That was usually

why there was always an opening under the house--so the air could circulate under. There is nothing under the house now but bits of potatoes. But as far as a solid foundation under the house, I guess that... the ones that I saw that had foundations under the houses around here were always much the same.

Renner: Like a skirt around the house?

Armstrong: Yes, we usually had skirting around it, but you usually saw that in town.

Renner: This house has a rock foundation.

Armstrong: Yes. It never had a solid foundation. I don't know where she put hers--under the house or under the porches. I don't where she kept hers. I used to spend a lot of time up here when I was a kid. She never made me go under the house to get the potatoes.

Renner: Is that why you spent time up here?

Armstrong: I guess so. On ironing day I found out that was the best day to visit grandmother. Mother would fill up the wood stove, and had those old irons. It was a good time to

leave home.

Renner: That was workday? I see you have had a chimney collapse?

Armstrong: The front chimney started going a couple of years ago. You won't find any bricks because we confiscated them a long time ago.

Renner: I wanted to ask you where the brick came from?

Armstrong: Well, we found Texas brick, Acme brick, Thurber brick. We know where the Thurber brick comes from.

Renner: It's large. That's what I had hold of. That's a Thurber brick.

Armstrong: We assumed all of those are Thurber brick, but some don't say Thurber brick. The house I was born in out here was moved from Thurber [Texas]. It's on Highway 20 now. Thurber became a big little town and went the same way--came up fast and went fast. Part of the structure is still around Thurber. We went through there not long ago. The house I was born in was moved from Thurber, and the brick came with it.

Renner:           These chimneys were patched together with brick?

Armstrong:       They obviously have been patched because the brick was too new...when it started coming down, it was too new. We had some squirrels living in the house, and they were coming in and out of the chimney. I guess the mortar was dry, and all of sudden it started settling, and a few days later there would be some more.

          The porch has probably been replaced a good ten times, being on the north side. The porch swing that hung on [this] porch, it hung on [this] west end. When we moved back in 1974, it still was a porch swing that my brother was lying on "buck-naked" when he was a baby, and he was born in 1932. During the winter they took the swings--they had the hooks that the chain was on--and pulled it clear up to the ceiling so it didn't get the winter weather. It was a lot better porch swing than is built now. We tried to restore it, but it just had dry rot I guess, because it

was in really bad shape.

My grandparents left out here and moved to town in 1948, and they rented the place out for about two years. Then my uncle and aunt moved here, and [this] became the blacksmith shop right [over there], and [this] became an extension. It was shaded here, too, so they worked on a lot of equipment [up here].

When we moved back, around about where I am standing was about as close as you could get to that tree for the junk, which was all around it. There was a--I guess we don't have any of it left--tree trunk [here] that had been cut smooth, and there was a five-gallon can. Anybody who drove down the road stopped and sat here and had a drink of water or two, and the blacksmith shop was the same way in the wintertime. The blacksmith shop was open on the south end. It didn't have doors. It was enclosed except for the south end. The forge was set up in one corner. They had a drill press in it, and it had a work bench

with a lot of drawers. We found bolts and nuts on baling wire [here and there and everywhere]. On [this end] of it was the garage, and it did have a door on it. It had been added on when we got a car.

Renner: The garage was across the road from the house?

Armstrong: Yes. Before [this] mobile home was moved [over there], this was the blacksmith shop. The shop was across the road. When I was a little girl, if anybody that was over there besides the family, I was not to go over there. In other words, if there were a bunch of men hanging around, I was not supposed to go over there. If I was with my grandfather or whatever, I could go over there, but if there was a car sitting there I didn't know, I couldn't go over there. [Over there] was the gate that went into [that] pasture.

Renner: I see some more of that pipe that the barn and corral was built with.

Armstrong: You can see how narrow the equipment was by how narrow they built the gate. I can get



that little F-10 Ford pickup through there without any problem, and a big pickup if you're careful, but it was definitely built before anything very large.

Renner: This yard was fenced?

Armstrong: It was fenced. You can see the wire [over there] that goes all the way back behind [that] tree.

Renner: It follows the tree line?

Armstrong: The fence went, I guess, right along [here], and on the other side of the crape myrtles, you had the flower bed [over there on this side] of the fence. The crape myrtles my grandmother sat out, and they were always there. I'm fifty, and there were always crape myrtles there. They have died, but they have come back.

Due to the oil money, this farm was a little above what most people had--the little extras, cement sidewalks, little extras around.

Renner: This was in the early 1930s? This was done at the same time?

Armstrong: Yes, the steps. When they poured that [out

there], they poured all of it, and it was done with oil money. We found mule shoes all over the place. We found a Buick hubcap out here--one of those little small ones--a pair of scissors, right at the edge, under the house, an old pair of scissors. If there was any money on the place that dropped, they found it.

Renner: Are these pecan trees?

Armstrong: No, most of them are hackberry trees. These two [over here] are hackberries. There are maybe...about the only thing that gets in this area is called cottonwood rot. The root rots, and, all of a sudden, a tree will fall over. Inside is this powder. Some insects bother them, but not too bad. Bagworms are the worst, as far as insects go. [These] were planted in 1915, some of it. This one [over here], a big one behind the mailbox, is so high. There was a fence that crossed [there]. We salvaged it. I trimmed on [this one] to shape it. It was kind of ugly.

Renner: How about the new well?

Armstrong: That, too, was built with oil money. I don't know how many feet deep it is for sure. My aunt said she thought about 500 feet. It's the original windmill. It came from Indiana. It was still in one piece. It had been chained down for years and years. All it did was turn with the wind, but the shaft didn't roll. The weekend my mother was moved to town, that chain broke loose, and it started spinning, and blades started going in every which direction. They were in the ground. It was one of those days when the wind wasn't blowing. It was in the spring. We chained it down again, and it has jerked loose again. It did its damage to itself that first time it jerked loose. You didn't dare go over there. In later years, he put an electric motor on it.

Renner: Same time as the house?

Armstrong: Yes, the house was wired, and the line came up to it.

Renner: That was about World War II?

Armstrong: Right after World War II, when REA came

through. We left here in 1944, and we were still using kerosene lamps then. It was probably the spring of 1946, because I came up here that summer, and, all of a sudden, everybody had electricity. My aunt and uncle had a bathroom and just things that they had never had before. There was another little house out here that had a pump in it, that they poured a cement slab for.

Renner: It was a pump before it was a windmill?

Armstrong: No. They put a pump on it when they put the electricity into it.

Renner: The windmill is original?

Armstrong: Yes, the windmill is original, other than what repairs have been made to it. I don't know much about what the tank was for, unless it was a holding tank. It was chained down. When they left it...well, when he put in electricity really was when it started getting chained down. They had a thing that you pulled to stop it. The overhead tanks [over here], I don't know about.

Renner: I was going to ask you where the tower and tank set?

Armstrong: I want to say it set [out there] by it. I know where the one set where we lived, and I can remember one sitting around here, and it would have to be close by it. We had a thing you pulled, when it was running over, that kept it from pumping anymore. Why he didn't just chain that, I don't know. It could have broken, but it was chained. Somebody would climb up a ladder and chain it.

Renner: I see.

Armstrong: There's not much house left, but that old well is still there.

Renner: About the same age as this well?

Armstrong: No. That well is machine-drilled. It was just small. The house we lived in was an old interesting house, but it was one of the first ones that burned.

Renner: We may have...well, I am sure we do. We have that one located [down there], and we probably saw it yesterday.

Armstrong: You went right by where it was. There are

two houses [over there on this other road], one on one side of the creek and one on the other side.

Renner: The south house was the diary farm?

Armstrong: No, the diary farm was [that way].

Renner: You were west of Corgin [?].

Armstrong: We were west of there. "Casey" Jones was the last one to really live in the house. When they divided the property, my aunt and uncle got it. Anyhow, there was a little house between [this house] and the house we lived in. It was moved from Pilot Point. It was a little two-room house, the way I can remember, because my aunt and uncle were living there. I have pictures of when my mother was carrying me when I was a baby in front of that house, so it was moved fifty years ago. How they moved it, I don't know.

Renner: On skids, a wagon. That's something I have been wondering about recently.

Armstrong: I just wonder how they got things like that across bridges. There's the \_\_\_\_\_ bridge. I haven't seen it in years and years, and I

guess it was in the late 1950s. The last time I went across that old bridge, it set way [back here] and crossed over.

Renner: Metal?

Armstrong: Yes, it was metal. But I always wondered how they got this house, the threshing machine, and a lot of stuff like that...I guess they had to wait for dry weather to cross. I know that the thresher could not get across that bridge. It was a strictly one-lane bridge. There was a bridge at the end of this road--you can't get across it now--and it was a little one-lane bridge with metal sides on it. A fellow moving a bulldozer, there was a man ahead of him. I don't know why they were going it, but the one in front said he was behind him and said all of a sudden those lights just disappeared. The truck and everything just went down. They had to get a crane out here to get the bulldozer out of there.

Renner: People seemed to have moved houses a lot-- structures and sheds.

Armstrong: Yes, this was a shotgun house that I was

born in--three rooms and not very big rooms, either. We were laughing that my daughter has a large room in her house...she just bought a house that has rooms bigger than the house I was born in. It definitely was a shotgun house. You opened the front door, and the back door, and that's why it was called a shotgun house--if you shot a gun, it would all go out the back door. Remember that Thurber is out before you get to Ranger [Texas] on Interstate 20, just this side of Ranger. That is quite a distance. I was born in 1937.

Renner: Ranger is about fifty miles?

Armstrong: No, more than that--about sixty miles. We have a fellow working for us right now who is from Gordon [Texas], and it is 100 miles driving. How they moved it that far...of course, it wasn't a big house.

There is also something funny. I was born [up here], and my brother was born in [that] house [down there]. We moved [up here] simply because it was closer. Then



we moved back [down there]. I don't every remember living [up here]. Then we moved back [down there], maybe because it was too close. Why we moved from place to place...the only answer I ever got was why we moved back [up here] before I was ever born was because it was closer. My great-grandmother at the time was sick, and my father was the only one that could give her shots, who had the nerve to give her some kind of shots. I don't know what she had, but she had to have shots every day. But that may be why they moved [back of here]. She died in 1928. They were living here when they got married, and they moved [down there] and had my brother, and then moved back [up here]. I don't why they moved back.

All the houses belonged to my grandfather. We never owned our own house, except my uncle lived across the creek from us. That was his wife's property. That other Jones family is a large family. They owned their house, and they were the only

ones that did.

My father was the only one to leave. He left in 1944. I never knew exactly why. I was seven years old, and I was told to keep my mouth shut when I saw them packing. I was told not to bring any books home from school one day, and the next day we were gone. My grandfather was not happy. I think it came to the point that my mother said, "I'm leaving! You can go or not!" I think it was because everybody lived so close together.

Renner: Very extended family.

Armstrong: Yes. I think the part that finally got to Mother was that Dad had bought some calves, and she fed them and went through this ordeal with them. My grandfather was going to Fort Worth to sell some cattle, and he loaded up those calves and sold them. She never saw a dime of it. He considered that they were raised on his property, so they were his. He doled out the money. Mother said we were always dressed well enough to carry the Jacobs name, and our cars were

good enough to get us around, but not too damned far. In other words, he didn't want us leaving him. The daughter left, and she married a man from Pilot Point who was in service. They came back, but they were gone a lot of years. There were five of them, four boys and one girl. The youngest boy died as a "wino" at the age of thirty-six.

It was quite a drinking family. There were probably 2,000 wine bottles hauled off this place, that we found [here and there]. When I was a kid, I would go down in that machine shed. It was always fun to go down and climb around stuff. Any toolbox you opened had a half-full bottle of wine or something in it. It wasn't allowed in the house. In fact, my grandfather thought my grandmother didn't know he drank. This is one of the reasons we were not to go to the blacksmith shop if there was anybody else there, because there was a lot of drinking was taking place [over there and under here].

Renner: Man's business?

Armstrong: Yes. The best way to describe all of them is to say that they were alcoholics except for Dad. My father was only a beer drinker, but I will say he died an alcoholic. That wasn't what killed him, but he had to have his liquor. They bought it by the case.

My great-grandfather was nearly seventy years old when my grandmother was born. She was the last of the twenty-three kids. I just really don't know much about him except what I have read. None of my family, of course, knew him. He supposedly was an acquaintance of Sam Houston. He was a Democrat, but I don't know much about his personality. I see traits in our family that I think must have come from him, but the ones I knew didn't come from him. I see traits that I know came from my grandmother and her mother. When Mother used to have breakfast with my great-grandmother, his second wife, the reason why they ate breakfast alone was because

everybody ate breakfast and got to the field. Mother said that by the time she got sat down and started, they were all through and left. So, they ate breakfast after everybody left. I see this trait in my family. You are always the last in line for anything.

Renner: I see it in mine, too. There are some things that women did for the men; and men took care of business, and the women took care of the men.

Armstrong: My father, until the day he died, knew where his underwear was because Mother got tired of him coming out of the tub and hollering for his underwear. She started keeping it in the bathroom. When we got ready to go somewhere, even in his work clothes...now, he knew where his work clothes were. But when we got ready to go somewhere, his socks were in his shoes, and his clothes were hung up. That's just the way it was. Mother came down to our house probably three times all the time I was raising the kids and stayed a couple of

days. She cooked ahead of time things for him to heat. Dad couldn't do anything for himself in regards to housework. In later years, he learned to vacuum when he retired. Mother couldn't retire, so he did learn to vacuum and do some things like that. It was just always was that way. There were just things that the men didn't do. It was very much that way out here. Every uncle I had was like Dad. They didn't do anything in the house. I remember Mother humped up over a wash pot and ironing on that wood stove. I would not be out working.

We used to have big ice cream parties. Everybody would bring their ice cream freezer and make different kinds of ice cream.

Renner: Ice cream parties?

Armstrong: Yes. Everybody in Pilot Point thought this whole area out here was kind of weird. They kind of stuck together, I guess. Everybody out here went to Mount Pleasant Church. It was a community, and Pilot

Point just didn't understand what a close community it was. But you had your ice cream things, and you would invite all the neighbors. We went to Pilot Point to buy groceries, and that was about it.

[Tape 2, Side 2]

Armstrong: Mainly out here we raised corn, oats, cattle, hogs, and wheat. I remember them picking corn with mules and a wagon. The mules would go so far and then stop until all the corn in that section was picked. I can remember shucking corn, watching them shuck corn, when I was little. Cotton was a good crop out here. In fact, at one time it was probably the biggest crop. Mother made me a cotton sack, and I covered the bottom of it with cotton and took it to wagon. He would give me my fifty cents, and she would tell me to go play. Every morning I would do this, and he would always have a fifty-cent piece to give me. I guess he was telling me to get out of the way, because he would tell me to go on and play. Oh, yes, Mother always made me spend

it on clothes, though. But I thought I was doing something and really helping. I had that little cotton sack.

The rest of the time, I played with black kids. I didn't know much difference between races. They played just as well as anybody else did.

Singleton: So, you helped in bringing in the crops?

Armstrong: Oh, yes, you had to pick the cotton out of the bolls. Any black family in Pilot Point that you run into or talk to, their parents or grandparents used to come out here and work when we needed extra help. He was also real good to them.

They had a kind of a nightclub or whatever there in town for years and years. I can barely remember it. But they would go there on Saturday nights and get into a little trouble, and he would always bail them out. I guess it was because he needed the hands.

He had one man working out here that always managed to spend his money before he could get home, so my grandfather just made



a trip to town every payday and gave his money to his wife. He had one [out here] who drove that old tractor. In fact, he passed away not many years ago. He left the area, and he hasn't been back. We called him "Stare." His name was Curtis Harris. He could hear that tractor running--my grandfather could--and he would put "Stare" on the tractor and come back up to the house. We would be eating, and we could hear the tractor. "Stare" had one leg. He had a kind of artificial leg. He had been known to take his artificial leg from him so he would have to stay on the tractor. He would finally be under a tree somewhere not plowing. "Stare" himself told me that. He used to come back after he moved back. He always came by the house.

Singleton: Were there a lot of black families in the area, or were they just of spread out or was there a community?

Armstrong: No, they usually lived on somebody's place, so they were spread out to that degree, or they lived in town. I don't know if any

owned their own property back then. I just don't know of any, except where they lived in town. The couple who lived here so many years, after my grandparents moved to town, they also moved to town. They moved to Fort Worth, and he worked as a porter in the Continental bus station for years and years.

Margaret didn't live too long after they moved. They brought her back and buried her in Pilot Point.

One woman who took care of me when I was little passed away not long ago. She was in her nineties. She lived in Krum [Texas], but for anybody who needed her, she was hired out. Mother used her when I was born. If it was crop time or whatever and everybody was in the field, Margaret, or "Maggie," as we called her, would come out and stay with me.

Singleton: Did you use a lot of midwives?

Armstrong: Yes. All the women around were midwives, more or less. When I was born, all the neighbor women came, and the doctor. If

the doctor did not get there in time, everybody knew what to do. Mother helped with...I guess when my cousin was born, Dad got into the car and went out and gathered up all the women, or told them it was time. I remember him talking about how cold it was. As far as I know, that aunt was the only one who ever ended up in the hospital. After she had the child, I think she hemorrhaged or something, and she was in the Sherman hospital for quite some time. They were in bed for ten days. They weren't allowed to stand up for ten days-- completely opposite from now. Now they let you walk from the delivery room.

Singleton: What was the name of the doctor?

Armstrong: Dr. Harris was the doctor who delivered me. That was fifty years ago. Then they had a Dr. Shiflett, who was back when my mother lived, and then there was a Dr. Riley. He lived to be a 101. I don't think there are any Rileys left around here. I think the Harrises branched off, and I don't think that there are any of them around here. He

was over at Hebron, which is a community three miles west of here. A tornado wiped it off the map.

Singleton: When was the tornado?

Renner: It was 1907.

Armstrong: That was probably when a lot of the storm cellars were built out here, because they said it was really "wild and woolly" on that day.

Singleton: Did the Great Depression affect people around here?

Armstrong: I guess it did in its own way. It was all involved at the same time as the Depression, but this family did not suffer from the Depression because of the oil. By the time I came along and I could remember things, we were almost into the war. I heard Mother and Dad comment a lot of times about how, if they didn't go to town, they didn't know that the Depression had hit, except for some things you couldn't get. But it just really didn't affect them. As long as everybody had a garden...and I think the people in the country probably

survived the Great Depression better than city folks because they raised their own food.

We used to have an iceman. We all had iceboxes. He came with cold drinks and bread and other things. During the Depression, nobody had iceboxes, anyway.

Mother said that there was a man who came around before the Depression, and they called him the "tinkerer." He came in a wagon, and he would stock up in town and come out for twenty cents an hour here. He'd pick up some items that women did need to buy. He carried bolts of cloth, yarn, needles, just all kinds of stuff. Sometimes he also repaired pots and pans. He carried lace. Everybody wore the bodices and the camisoles, and he had a lot of lace. He carried lace. She said it was amazing, what all he could get on that wagon. She said he would start dropping those doors down, and she said everything was nailed up. She said it was like walking in a department store to her. He

carried things that they had to have, but really could live without. I think he came through about four times a year, and that was all. He always brought some grocery supplies to them when he came. Word-of-mouth, Mother said, spread that he would be in the area, and within six hours you knew where he was and about when he would be to your house--you know, if it would be two days or three or when.

Singleton: I bet a lot of women waited in anticipation.

Armstrong: Yes. Grandmother bought a lot of material from him. She had three daughters, and she got most of her material from him.

In the 1940s we had a Manor bread man who came through--the 1940s and early 1950s. He brought bread and cakes. Just like the milkman, he had a regular route. I found that real fascinating. The milkman at one time--the iceman--left our milk. I guess if our cow was dry or whatever, she would buy milk. He left everything by our mailbox down on the corner. If he honked

his horn--of course, you could hear him--we would go up there and get our milk. You would leave the order in the mailbox, and we would go to the mailbox and get our stuff. But the iceman was...we always bought ice on Saturday when we went to town. That was the last thing we bought. We had an old tub that we put our ice in. There was an icehouse in Pilot Point. The iceman was a real important man back in those days.

Renner: Was there a lot of mail order catalog business?

Armstrong: No, there was but not that much. Mother said that they ordered a lot out of the catalog.

Singleton: People ordered farm machinery or sewing machines?

Armstrong: Well, Mother's first sewing machine she ordered. They delivered it [out here] when she ordered for herself. She said it was a case that she ordered it, and a man came and brought it. She got it somewhere out of Fort Worth. Both of my aunts bought one

at the same time, so he brought them and showed them how to work them. They were the old pedal-type. She had it until 1950. Now, her mother used to order quite a bit. I don't know if it was from Sears or where it was from.

After I came along, we made a trip to Denton probably once a month. My family would load up the car and go to Denton. I got to go more, I guess, because I was the youngest and wasn't in school. I remember going with the women a lot of times by myself. Twice a year...one time they would go to Dallas and the other time to Fort Worth, and they picked up \_\_\_\_\_ for their fall wardrobe. It was either Dallas or Fort Worth.

Like I said, this family had this oil money, and they did a few more things. My grandfather always had a new car. He was the only one who did. We always had to go in his car. He sent my father to school in Chicago, to electrician's school. I guess he was there for nearly nine



months. He was a A+ student in it, but he never used it. He said he learned enough to be scared to death of it and never had the confidence to use it. But his main purpose of sending him to school--that was in 1927--was because electricity was coming to town, and he wanted somebody in the family to know about it. That was when my mother lived [up here]. They married in 1926.

Singleton: When did you get your first phone?

Armstrong: We were the first ones out here, I guess, to have a phone--well, my grandparents were. It was hanging on the wall from the time I can remember, and I can remember it ringing during the night--emergency messages, somebody got shot or wrecked a car or something. My grandfather must have slept with a pistol every night, and he was one of those kind of people that was hard to wake up. Everytime you would get up to answer the phone, he would have a pistol in his hand. I don't know why. It was just that...I was taught not to be afraid, if I

saw him standing there in his underwear and talking on the phone with a pistol in his hand, that he was just that way. I was also taught not to ever go wake him up because I might be looking at the pistol. I don't know why he was that way, but he was.

His family we can trace to his mother's side a long way, clear back to Georgia. His father came from Tennessee, Mississippi. We don't know where he came from before Tennessee, the Jacobs clan. I have never had a chance to find out.

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

Armstrong: I don't know. That is what we would like to find out on this Jacobs side. We don't know. We have a picture of him. Dad said he never remembered seeing the man without a beard, but we don't know why he wore a beard. We don't know if he was possibly Jewish, or if he was cut off. I can't hang on to money, so I don't think I have any Jewish blood in me. That's what we always laugh about. We just don't have any idea

on the Jacobs name. I have a friend [over here] in Pilot Point. Her name is Moses, and she gets hit with these questions, and she doesn't know. You would think that they would be Jewish names, so I would like to go back and track him down and see why he left where he left.

Singleton: When your grandfather came, did other families come with him at the same time?

Armstrong: This one that came here did. As far as families, the Montgomerys and the Jacobs came together. Reason Jones is [this man], and Roy's grandfather was an uncle to Reason Jones. He didn't come here; he went out to Kaufman [Texas], but a bunch of his kids came here with Reason Jones, or they all came together. I don't know when he came through here. They said that he came here in 1859 and founded the place. I don't know if he just went up there and sold them the goods to come down here or if some more came back and got their places and went back for their families. I don't know, but they were quite large families,

all of them.

Singleton: Did the Joneses, when they came, become part of the Peters Colony?

Armstrong: No, I think Peters Colony came after that. I can't remember. When was Peters Colony started?

Singleton: Was that in 1840?

Armstrong: Well, this was after. Now, the Joneses came to Pilot Point in the 1890s, somewhere around there. There is a Fluche up around Muenster [Texas]. He came from Minnesota or somewhere down to here and bought a bunch of land in Windthorst, Muenster, Lindsey, Pilot Point. He brought lots of families down here. That's the reason we have these little German communities. Then Montague County [over here] is full of Italians [pronounced as "Eye-talians"]. I find that very interesting. You drive into Montague, and the mailboxes have all of these Italian names on them. It was a group of families from Italy that settled there.

Singleton: Where did the German families settle?

Armstrong: Most of the German families around Pilot Point settled north and east of town.

Singleton: Out toward Tioga?

Armstrong: Yes, and out toward Celina. I don't think that there were any south or west. I think that they settled mostly north and east. They settled all over Muenster and Windthorst, which is around where Archer City is today.

Singleton: Are they mostly farming or dairy?

Armstrong: Farming is what they did. A lot of them are still farming. Pilot Point, up until the early 1960s, was just like the blacks and whites, only it was the Germans [Catholics] and Protestants, as far as class officers. It was the Germans versus the Protestants then.

Singleton: Were the Germans mostly Catholic?

Armstrong: Yes.

Singleton: You didn't see any Catholic cemeteries in Pilot Point.

Armstrong: You saw very little of them inter-marrying back then. My cousin comes back to Pilot Point, and she is amazed at how we all live

together now. Just back to the early 1950s, my kids ran around with a bunch of the German Catholics, and one is a Catholic now. It all changed somewhere when they started to school. From the first grade up, I think, was when it really started changing. It is really funny how people can change.

A lot of the German Catholic families [over there] had married somebody from Lindsay or Muenster. The Muenster phone directory is hilarious with names. The phone directory up there shows how dominant the Germans are up there. Then you find somebody [over here] who is married to someone, but doesn't have a Pilot Point German name. She's from the \_\_\_\_\_ side or whatever in Muenster or Lindsay. We have a Windthorst girl [over here].

Singleton: Do you ever remember going to Valley View or Burns City [both in Texas]?

Armstrong: Burns City, my grandfather's mother lived up there. I can remember going up there one. As far as going to Burns City for

anything, no. I can remember going to Gainesville with my father. I don't ever remember going up there with my mother, just my father. Probably it was on some farm business or something. I remember going to Denton. I don't remember going to Sanger when I was a kid. Valley View, I heard of it, but I never went to Valley View. Sanger, I think I had a relative over there, and that is the only reason I went over there. I had never heard of Celina until I got up...

Singleton: You did your shopping in Denton? Pilot Point?

Armstrong: We went to Denton, Pilot Point, Fort Worth, and Dallas. I don't know if it was because they didn't have anything or what...but Pilot Point...Russell's Department Store started out in Pilot Point on the south side of the square. I didn't know Pilot Point had a big furniture store; I don't remember when they had a theater.

Singleton: Did most people make their own furniture then?

Armstrong: I don't think this bunch ever did, even Reason Jones. I am quite sure they probably did some, but what furniture I have seen, which I don't have any of, which came out of Reason Jones's place, was bought furniture. Now I don't know if they replaced what they originally started out with or what, but the only thing that I had any hopes of finding up in that barn was a trundle bed, and it was gone. Dad said it had been bought. I remember seeing in some of these old places the rope beds and all and was thinking...but there was absolutely nothing left in that barn except an old humpback trunk. Where it came from, I don't know, and there wasn't anything in it. All of Reason Jones's things, I have no idea what happened to them. My grandmother's things...when she broke up housekeeping, the kids divided her things. She took her personal things and what she had to have. I did get off with her wedding band. I guess arthritis did her in, and she couldn't wear it any longer. It was stored



over here in this cubbyhole, both great-grandmothers' wedding bands. I guess they didn't have many things. It didn't take a big moving van to move them.

Singleton: I would be interested to hear about the Union Hill School?

Armstrong: According to this book that I keep quoting things out of, Reason Jones was supposed to have helped to build it, and it gave a description of the building, where there was a window and where the fireplace was. But as far as kids that went there, I don't know when it was built. I just know it was the forerunner to Bloomfield School.

Singleton: Probably all the neighboring families that lived around here sent their children to school there.

Armstrong: Yes. Mother can remember schoolteachers that taught at Bloomfield. She remembers every teacher that she ever had. They always lived with somebody. They usually weren't married. They lived with somebody until they married a local boy and quit teaching; and then they would get another

teacher in.

Singleton: Usually, did a local family put them up and get a small salary?

Armstrong: Yes, she could really name off all of the ones she had. They made quite an impression on her.

Singleton: Did the school season run pretty much the way it does now?

Armstrong: No, I think the school season ran with the crops, and no holidays back then. They went to school all winter. This old story of walking to school, I think Dad walked to school, which wasn't a long walk across [here] to Bloomfield. His two brothers rode horses. His dad hated horses. And my aunt walked, because I have heard her tell about a bull that she stood around and waited until he was looking in the other direction. Mother has talked about walking. She has a foot that is a little odd, and it was frostbitten due to walking on ice to school. But if it was real bad or anything, they were taken to school in a wagon. They didn't walk through snow if

the weather was bad enough.

Singleton: What kind of recreation did the kids have then?

Armstrong: Dad said he didn't have any recreation. He said that in this whole area, if it looked like fun, it was a sin (chuckle). That is kind of the way that Bloomfield was.

Mother was a little bit younger than her kid sisters, and she played alone a lot. She talks about catching a little pig close to the fence and dressing it like a doll and these things. I don't think she played that many games because she was so much younger.

They talked about what they used to do for entertainment. They used to go to book reviews at Bloomfield. There was some kind of play that they used candles for. I will have to get her to tell you about that. They used to have plays at Bloomfield. The Bloomfield School had a little stage like they do at North Texas. I can remember the curtain, the roll-up curtain, that had the lake scene to advertise the outside. So,

they had plays.

After they married, "Kodaking" was a big thing. Even before they married, every Sunday, if the weather was decent, there are albums and albums and pictures when they went "Kodaking." Film must have really been cheap. They took these group pictures of [here and here]. That was quite a thing.

Singleton: That was quite a novelty for them, I'm sure.

Armstrong: Yes. [Out here] they did not dance. Mother's dancing consisted of...her oldest sister and husband lived on the Emerson Ranch out east of town for a while, and Mother used to beg to stay with her because they went to all the German parties and danced. We had a centennial thing on the square in Pilot Point, and I had my aunt up there. She has just turned ninety. We were sitting on the curb watching the square dancers, and she commented, "You know, my mother went to her grave and didn't ever know that I danced." She said

what her mother didn't know didn't hurt her. My grandmother thought that was very sinful. Like Dad said, if it looked like fun, it was a sin. I don't know about games. I just never heard either of my parents mentioning any games that they played.

Singleton: Mr. Jones said that cards came in fashion and later dominoes.

Renner: They used to play baseball.

Armstrong: Yes, they played baseball, but I think that was probably in later years. What they did when they were kids...now, I can remember [down here] where we lived, we couldn't have grass in the front yard because we had too much shade. We didn't have Saint Augustine grass then. We played marbles, "mumbledy peg," "kick the can," "Annie over," and I don't know where we learned those. I guess we learned them at school. But we played marbles. We had holes from [here to there].

Singleton: Did the girls play, too?

Armstrong: My brother did, and it was his friend that

I played with. He was five years old. He also would change the rules of the game everytime we played. We played checkers and things like that.

Singleton: I imagine so many of the kids had chores to occupy their time.

Armstrong: Mother was a bit of a tomboy. Most things I hear her talking about were outside things that she used to do. She learned how to sew, so I assume that when he was inside she was doing things like that. She learned to cook. She let me get away with tagging around with my father doing more outside things than inside things. When I had to cook, I knew how to cook breakfast. I learned how to sew, iron, and do some things, but not like they did. They learned those things because you had to do those things. Like, canning, they had to learn how to can because you had to can.

Singleton: Did you do any canning when you were a child?

Armstrong: Oh, heavens! I never did do anything when I lived [out here]. I don't remember doing

much of anything in town after we moved to Breckenridge [Texas], because we had all these modern conveniences. For the first two weeks, I walked down the hall to flush the commode because we had one all of a sudden. Electricity, gas--we had all these modern conveniences all of a sudden.

My mother really spoiled me rotten. I didn't do much of anything until I got into high school. Somehow, she always managed to sprinkle down clothes on Friday night, and Saturday I stayed and ironed, cleaned the bathroom, and cleaned my room. Sewing, I did that because I liked clothes probably, and that was the only reason I learned how to sew. The rest of the time I could go out to the pump unit and do all those things. That's what I would rather do. I would rather be outside doing things rather than in the house. On Saturday was really the only time she tied me down. But they had to learn how.

Renner: Did you have wood stoves?

Armstrong: Yes, we did [out here]. We had wood cook

stoves, and we had different types of heaters that were really interesting. You had the kind you used one year and threw it out. Those were the little, round potbelly stoves. Sheet metal is what I call them now, and one year was about all you could get out of it. Those were the kind you threw out, and what is funny is that we can't find any of those. I guess they were so thin that they just rusted away. Now, the old cast iron ones, we used those, and we can find pieces of those. [Over here] they had one, and my brother stayed in his house [over here]. It had one of those tall, very ornate wood stoves.

Singleton: Was it painted?

Armstrong: No, it had some glass on the front. The wood could only be so thick for it. It had some decorative thing up on the top. It was very decorative. This was the heater. Now, on the wood stoves, the cook stoves, mother's had six burners, and one of them you could take out and drop a pot in it. That was where you got your hot water



ready, was out of that pot. We had running cold water, but we did not have hot water. It had a warming oven and a bottom oven, and then it had another reservoir over on the side. When the oven was hot, that water would get hot.

Singleton: Did you ever have to cook outdoors?

Armstrong: They did [over here]. They cooked out.

[Tape 3, Side 1]

Armstrong: Now, my husband's parents had an outdoor privy until 1965. They would get into big arguments about what room to put the bathroom in until they finally gave up and moved to town.

Singleton: That's one way to settle the argument (chuckle).

Armstrong: For ten years I listened to them argue about where to put a bathroom until they finally gave up and moved to town. I developed very good kidneys out there--a good bladder. Rattlesnakes were predominant out there.

They used wood stoves until 1959. She had an electric cook stove, but for heating

they used wood stoves and burned sticks. The only reason they finally got butane was because of one of our daughters...wood smoke, she just couldn't live in it. Also, they didn't have their youngest son to cut wood anymore, so they went to butane. [Out here] is the only kitchen standing.

I can remember that the only cooking outside was over at [this house] when they were having a big feed. They would barbecue half a cow or something out there. I can remember that. They'd have the big pots of beans, and the women would be in the house making potato salad and all those things. I can remember a few of those things. But for ordinary cooking, because it's so hot, they said this one [over here] used to cook over an open fire outside rather than heat up the house, and that was why they went on and built the kitchen off to the side of the house.

Singleton: We noticed that for a lot of people, their kitchen was added later, and we wondered if they had cooked outdoors.

Armstrong: Down in the South, so many of the kitchens were completely separate from the house for fire reasons and the heat.

Singleton: Do you know if your grandmother had a detached kitchen? Do you know if she cooked outside?

Armstrong: The great-grandmother cooked outside on an open fire.

Renner: So, there was no fireplace in the log house?

Armstrong: No, there was no fireplace. Dad said when they moved in there, he was just a little kid, and what they used for heat he said mainly was a fire outside. There was so much risk of fire hazard that they built a fire outside.

Singleton: The dogtrot house never had a fireplace?

Armstrong: Not that he ever remembered. Now, he said if it did, it had been replaced. He said these two houses were the coldest houses he ever spent in his life. This house had no heat upstairs, no insulation.

Singleton: But it had a fireplace downstairs?

Armstrong: It had stoves. It didn't have fireplace.

He said he spent some of the coldest nights upstairs in this house [over here] on the north side.

Singleton: You mentioned the smokehouse when we were walking around the property. Did it have a fireplace?

Armstrong: No, they had a little...it was rock. Ours was brick, but theirs was rock. In the center of the floor, you built your fire there.

Singleton: You made a little fireplace?

Armstrong: That's how you smoked the meat. The only thing we smoked down here was the pork.

Singleton: Did people ever salt that?

Armstrong: I don't ever remember it being salted. Everything I ever remember was strictly smoked. I guess in all this, it was like chickens. I didn't like chicken; I didn't like sausage. I didn't like all these things. I guess it was because I saw all this going on. Mother said that within a year after we moved, I couldn't get enough sausage and chicken--after I got away from it. It never really was appetizing to walk

into a smokehouse, and here was all your meat hanging out there. It's a wonder we didn't all die.

Now, killing chickens and dressing those, I made a mistake one time, and I can remember it very well. I was showing an interest in the kitchen, and mother could wring a chicken's neck before it knew what hit it, which I thought was cruel. I always ended up out behind the garage or heading for the other side, and it never failed that here would be the chicken flopping around without a head. [This] grandmother, she never could wring the necks. She always used a hatchet. I guess I would starve to death. I just wouldn't eat meat.

Singleton: The women did the chickens and things like that, and the men did the hogs?

Armstrong: Yes, the men got in on the hogs, and, of course, I don't remember a lot of beef being eaten around here. Now, we had calves, but the first time I remember round steak or anything like that was after we

moved. I don't ever remember seeing a T-bone steak until I was probably in high school.

Singleton: So, beef wasn't a major meat?

Armstrong: No. We ate mainly pork, chicken, a lot of fish. We had turkeys. We ate a turkey once a year and hated them the rest of the time. The turkeys didn't last long here. It takes my mother to tell how she hates turkeys. They are a stupid animal, and copperheads and anything else that came along killed the turkeys. We never had sheep.

Singleton: Mr. Jones said you had goats.

Armstrong: Yes. I don't think there were very many goats here. Now, we had geese on this place. Down where we were, we had ducks and chickens. I never knew why we had ducks.

Singleton: What about rabbits?

Armstrong: We ate rabbit occasionally. Dad would take a shotgun and go down and kill a rabbit or occasionally kill a squirrel.

Singleton: Did he hunt a lot?

Armstrong: No. I don't know why he ever hunted. I guess out of growing up, they all ate a lot of rabbits and squirrels. I guess occasionally he'd get hungry for it, but he was not a hunter. He just never really liked taking a gun to anything.

The man that used to lease his place for cattle had a bunch of yearling-age cattle that were his pets--fifty head. They broke out and ran one day. I don't know if my daughter's cat spooked them or what, but they scattered all over the country. Well, some of them came back over to my brothers place, and my sister-in-law was raised in a family that they butchered their own beef. She made the comment that "I will just go butcher a couple of them." My brother-in-law and I were standing there, and I said, "Well, Jim, I guess if it came to going out there and killing one of those cows or eating grass, I would just have to eat grass with them." He said, "Me, too."

I guess if it came to killing our own

food, we would have to eat vegetables, and my father was that way. He could have been sensitive if he shot a rabbit or squirrel occasionally to have meat on the table. I do not remember eating beef out here.

All of them went to market in town. We bought groceries in town once a week, but I don't ever remember standing in front of a meat counter. I never saw a piece of bologna or anything like that until we moved to Breckenridge. We weren't mainly vegetable-eaters. We just ate a lot of pork and chicken. We ate a whole lot of chicken.

**Renner:** Where were your markets? Where did you take your beef and grain? Where did you take these to?

**Armstrong:** He took most of the beef to Fort Worth. That is where he bought his calves. The grain that he sold, by the time I came along, it was in a truck when it left here, and I assume it went to Fort Worth. I can remember Morrison Milling, going down there a couple of times in a truck.



Renner: In Sanger?

Armstrong: In Denton. There was a place over in Sanger, and Morrison Milling owns it now. I can remember one time over there in a truck, and we took some grain. The cotton, of course, we took to the gin over in Pilot Point. I have no idea where the peanuts went.

Renner: To Aubrey?

Armstrong: They do now. I don't know if they had a peanut thing down there then or not. They probably did. By the time he got into peanuts quite a bit, I was in school and didn't get in on the peanut hauling a lot, except for right after school.

The cook shack that I mentioned, it was used with the thresher, or if they were picking cotton, it was...this bunch [out here] built it. It was on the bed of a truck, a flat-bed truck. However, the truck was an old, old Ford. It has huge pots and pans. My mother cooked one year for the thresher. The pans all hung up in the center. It had a wood cook stove in

it, tin plates. Everything that you cooked with was in that thing. You just walked into it and cooked. I can remember going shopping with Mother when we bought all the...he had ordered the flour and all these beans and all, but when mealtime came...all the time you were cooking. You dropped the sides down, and the men stood up and ate off the sides that dropped down. It had an oven for pies and cobblers. Very few things were made at the house. You walked into that every morning and cooked the noon meal.

Singleton: Did you eat a lot of berries? Did you have fruit trees?

Armstrong: My grandmother always had fruit trees [up here]. We had peach trees. She used to have an apple tree that every once in a while we would have apples. She had some pear trees. She had blackberry vines. My mother's mother gave her two cherry trees, and for a few years we had cherries out here. Then some tree disease...I can remember when the disease hit the trees,

and the cherry trees died. That was a tragedy.

Singleton: You mentioned the 1907 tornado. Were there other major weather disasters?

Renner: Floods?

Armstrong: No. What floods hit always stayed in the bottom. As far as the nearest thing to a tornado hitting [out here] has been over at my brother's place just a few years ago, in 1981. We walked all over this whole place and have never seen any trees that were twisted or looked like it has never been hit. Mother doesn't remember--her two sisters did--about how vicious it looked that day. Of course, it killed some people. This Dr. Riley that I mentioned, his son, I think, was crippled for life from it.

But other than that, as far as I know, there has never been a fire through here. We have had grasshoppers that have eaten everything. It seems to be a strip, about a one-mile strip, that we get hit every few years by grasshoppers. You talk to people

who lived [over there], and they didn't have grasshoppers. At the Shipley house [over here], everything would be devoured by the grasshoppers.

I have never heard the grandparents or anybody ever talking about any weather. Now I can remember being stranded out here by floods. I guess it was the fall of 1981 when there were five or six times that you couldn't get out out here.

Singleton: Did a lot of people leave the county after the tornado?

Armstrong: Hemming disappeared after the tornado. It wiped the town. It wasn't a big place. It was a community with a few stores. I think they had a...I don't know if it was a gin or what it was. They had some big building. But it just took the whole town. There was nothing left.

Singleton: Do you know what communities people moved into after that?

Armstrong: Oh, I would say most of them who didn't lose their houses stayed, but they drifted to Bloomfield or Fairview--in the same area

if they didn't rebuild. The only people that live around Hemming right now are people that have moved in and never had relatives here. There is no, what you would call, descendants on down that I know of that live right in that area. It's all new people. A lot of these communities...I don't remember any community there. The only communities that are left community-wise...Bloomfield basically really ceased to exist except for the cemetery. Fairview, the school, is still there. The people are still community-minded. It's like this lake [Lake Ray Roberts] has just torn away the Bloomfield community, and it no longer exists.

Singleton: People have the sense of "this is our community?"

Armstrong: Of being from the Bloomfield community, Sheptown is full of them now. My aunt [down here] was from Fairview. They still have this "being from Fairview," or they did until they died. They weren't from Bloomfield. Not that there is anyplace to

be from, because there was nothing there but a school. It was no longer a school; it was just a building. This kind of a community, and people still call this out here Hemming. That kind of surprises me after all these years of no existence. It is still the Hemming community.

Renner: I didn't realize it wasn't there. I thought it was still a town.

Singleton: People were still talking about it when we first started. We thought it was still there.

Armstrong: No, it hasn't been there in a long time. When I grew up, that was the Hemming community. There is nothing there but a house [here], and then maybe a half-mile down the road another house. But it was the Hemming community. The south part was called Friendship community.

Singleton: Yes, I have seen the sign of the Friendship Church.

Armstrong: There is nothing there anymore, but it is the Friendship community. Mustang community at least still has their old school

building and churches, a store. I assume that at one time these places had post offices. I know Bloomfield has a post office. I think the woman who named it "Bloomfield" served as the postmistress. Supposedly, when they came there were some yellow flowers blooming out in the field or pasture, and that's where it got its name of Bloomfield.

Singleton: Have you ever heard of a town called Mann?

Armstrong: Yes. In fact, there is a cemetery [out here] that is combined with [this one].

Singleton: It used to be out here where Highways 455 and 372 meet.

Armstrong: Yes. That was a different...I was never... until I was in high school, I was never on what they called the "wide road," except for where we crossed the bridge [down here] and got on it to go right into Pilot Point about two miles. I never remember being on that road until they built this new road. I was going to where Highways 372 and 455 intersect. I was never down there until they built this new road. If we went to

Sanger, or went out that way we went over on \_\_\_\_\_ hill. It didn't make much sense to go down [that way] and go [that way] because the roads were about all the same then. To go to Pilot Point, we would cut across [back here] through \_\_\_\_\_. All that was way off. Like Valley View, I heard of it. Celina, I had never heard of until I was a big kid. I knew of Aubrey, and I knew of Tioga [Texas]. I used to go to Tioga. My grandfather used to buy water up there. He thought that was the best stuff. I can remember going to Tioga some.

Singleton: This water you got was for drinking?

Armstrong: Drinking. The well is still out there. They sold bottled water. They even had bottles that said "Tioga."

Singleton: About what time was this?

Armstrong: It was beginning to phase out. We were probably their last customers when I was a little kid. I remember making some trips up there. He would take...I don't know what had been in those bottles. I guess that it was vinegar, probably. He would



take those back and get water in them.

I don't know when their big heyday was. I would say it was in the 1910s or early 1920s when they really advertised, and people were coming from a long way off. Now they go to Hot Springs [Arkansas] for hot baths. They were going to Tioga for the drinking water, and Mineral Wells [Texas] was another place. I don't think they bathed in it [up here]. They just drank it. It was supposed to be healthful.

Singleton: We saw something like a old train depot in Denton. Was there one [there] at one time?

Armstrong: Yes, every town had one. Aubrey's, I guess, is gone. Yes, that was our big treat when we went to Denton, was to get to ride the train home.

Singleton: So, you would get to ride the train from Denton to Pilot Point?

Armstrong: Yes. Mother and Dad would just drive on in and let us ride the train. That was a big treat. I don't ever recall riding from Pilot Point to Denton, but they put us on after shopping and let us ride the train to

Pilot Point. Pilot Point had a busy depot, and passenger trains went through [here] until the late 1950s. I can remember the old coal trains that were so dirty when they came through town. If you were at the tracks, you got sprinkled with cinders.

I remember the first diesel that I heard. We were not living here. My cousin was living in a house right next to the tracks. During the night I heard this terrible sound and got up running and met her in the hall, because she had heard it. It dawned on me that I hadn't ever heard one. It was a diesel. It just scared me right out of that bed. I had no earthly idea what was coming through.

We used to take pins, pennies, and nails, and we'd lay them on the track. When the train came by, it would flatten them.

Singleton: I think that every kid who has lived near a track has done that.

Armstrong: Then I guess train traffic wasn't so busy, because I can remember there were two days

a week that she would hang out sheets. This is Mother's niece, who is over eleven years younger than my mother. They were more like sisters than they were aunt and niece. Two days a week, she would hand out sheets, the rest of the time she wouldn't hand out sheets. I guess the train track was busier on some days than others.

Singleton: I imagine the train going by fairly close would spot up the white sheets,

Armstrong: As I say, this house was right on the tracks, and it wouldn't take long for the cinders to spot them.

Renner: What kind of goods did the train bring in?

Armstrong: As far as Pilot Point, I assumed it took away the cotton. I remember seeing those loaded on the train--the cotton bales. They had a cotton compress here. I have to say this is where the grocery stores got a lot of their bulk, because when we went to the grocery store, I wore flour sack skirts, shirts, and things. You bought flour in the sacks. I remember seeing wagons down at the train depot with sacks

of flour in them that they were unloading. As I say, they were going to the grocery stores.

Milk in town was usually bought from people in town that had cows or dairies around. It wasn't shipped in from Borden's. It was local milk.

Singleton: Did people make their own butter and cheese?

Armstrong: Oh, yes! Cheese, we didn't make around here; buttermilk and butter, we did. Churning used to be one of my kid chores, until it got too hard to turn. Then I didn't continue doing it. We made our own butter. That had to be a real clean operation. I never knew why, but you had wash your hands and be real careful around butter when you were making it.

Singleton: Did you sell your butter, eggs, and things like that?

Armstrong: No, we didn't. Like I said, we had this community deal here. We had the best milk cow. She was a Jersey, and she always gave more milk than we needed. It disappeared

from the house, what we didn't need. Butter was the same way. I don't know if my grandmother sold any of it or not. She sold...she had a lot of geese. There was a low spot out in front of the house that people called the "duck pond." She had a lot of geese, and this is where...that may have been why we also had the ducks, although I never saw our ducks run around without any feathers. I guess once a year they would get these poor geese down and pluck mainly their tail feathers. I tried not to go around on those days. Those geese did not like that. They put up quite a squawk. She had ducks [up here], also. They had feather beds, and I know she sold some feathers because they last a lot longer than one year, and I know they got those poor geese down once a year. I think she sold them. I have seen her bags out there. They also served watchdogs. There was always a little dog on the place, but the geese were the actual watchdogs.

They may have eaten ducks up here

because there would be a lot of ducks, and then there wouldn't be any ducks. Then there would be little ducks. But my mother has often told me about she didn't like ducks, so that may be why we didn't eat duck. We had some, but they didn't get picked, either.

Wintertime was when we ate most of the pork. I guess we had to eat it in the wintertime. All the women used to make biscuits every morning. That was just something you did.

Singleton: Was breakfast the main meal?

Armstrong: No. My mother cooked three meals a day until the day my father died.

Singleton: What was your largest meal?

Armstrong: The largest meal was probably their lunch. Now when we were in school, we ate lunch at school. We had a cafeteria, but sometimes we would bring our lunch because they didn't cook when it was real hot. At night, when it was hot, we had fruit. Somebody around here always had watermelon, cantaloupe. It seems like at night a lot

of times we would have pancakes--things that were quick to cook if it was warm. In the wintertime, if she had cooked a chicken for lunch, we had what was left over that night; or she cooked two chickens, and she would always remake the gravy or anything like that because the gravy would always be fresh. Vegetables, it was whatever had been canned that summer. We had a lot of green beans, canned corn. Okra, we ate it fresh. We tried canning it. I don't know why it didn't can right, but it just didn't.

Renner: I am curious about the garden. When we asked people about their gardens, we asked: "What did you grow?" Everybody always says, "Everything." So, we ask, "Did you grow [this]?" "Yes." "Did you grow [this]?" "Yes." What sorts of things did you grow in your garden? Now, don't say "everything."

Armstrong: In the spring we had what you called "cool weather" things. I remember mustard greens, turnips. I remember beets, and we ate beet

greens. It is very high in potassium. I know that now, but I didn't know it then. I always liked beet greens better than anything. They were slick, but they were good. We had spinach; we had lettuce. About the only time you could grow lettuce was in the spring. It was never head lettuce. It was always the leaf kind. We had radishes, cantaloupes--cantaloupes came later in the spring, but we planted them in the early spring. Carrots were very hard to get started, so you might have to make three or four plantings before you would get your carrots up. I can remember that. Potatoes were planted in the early spring. In fact, you planted the potatoes in January. Black-eyed peas, you planted a little later. We never raised our own pinto beans. I don't know why. We bought the dried beans in sacks, and also navy beans. I don't know if it was our soil or what. Green beans, we grew a lot of. In the summertime you had okra, corn, black-eyed peas, tomatoes--until it got to hot,



and then they weren't fit to eat because they would get kind of hard in the center. Some friends of my parents--their name was Gibbs--had, I guess, a feed-and-seed store on the north side of the square, and that was where we got the seeds. Mother didn't like to save the seeds from year to year to year to year because they got kind of... especially back when I was a kid. So, usually every year, she bought her seed, and it could be because they were friends she got a good buy. In the fall we usually had a second planting of tomatoes. She always started those in the house as seed and then move them out. We'd have more lettuce.

Singleton: What about pumpkins?

Armstrong: We never did have pumpkins. There was a saying around this hill about watermelon and pumpkins. Dad always told my brother and me that he would give a dollar for every watermelon--because we were always planting watermelon--that didn't have a handle on it. They would start out fine,

and then, when they would start forming, one end would always drop and kind of form a handle. He always said he would give us \$25 for a watermelon that didn't have a handle, and we never did get the \$25.

We raised gourds. Somebody gave my brother some gourd seeds, and everybody in the family all of a sudden had all these gourd dippers. Everybody had more than they needed because he and I had the biggest gourd crop you ever saw in your life. In fact, it finally got so out of hand that they had to plow them two or three times a year to keep them from coming up. They were taking over a whole pasture back there. We supplied everybody with gourds. I can't remember who...it was a man over in Pilot Point who was just asking one day if we would like some gourd seeds. Yes, we had lots of gourds. We really thought we were in business. We never tried to sell them; we just learned how to make the dippers. We put holes in them with leather straps.

Singleton: Did you have cucumbers and squash?

Armstrong: Yes.

Renner: Did you make pickles?

Armstrong: Oh, yes! Everybody had their pickles. I'm trying to think about what all we did have. We didn't have things like asparagus, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, or cauliflower. I ate my first cauliflower when I was twenty years old. I had been to the grocery store and had always wondered what that was and how you cooked it. So, finally one day I just bought one and played it by ear and loved it. But I was twenty years old before I ever had cauliflower. I introduced my mother to cauliflower, broccoli, Brussels sprouts, and things like that. My mother has canned pickles here in this trailer house. Everybody has their favorite pickle recipe. You just soaked them in the brine water and the cold water and all this to get them to stay crisp in the jars. Mother could turn out some good pickles.

Singleton: Were they sweet or dill pickles?

Armstrong: She made all kinds--sweet and dill pickles. She had one that was called sour pickles, but her bread-and-butter pickles were the best. They had a lot of onion in them. We had onions; you set them out in January. You always hung onto the...well, not the prettiest onions. They were good onions, but they were not the prettiest onions. Those were your pickle onions that you made bread- and-butter pickles with. They might be a little odd-shaped or something. You hung onto those for the pickles. I have seen my mother standing in [here], seventy-five years old, making pickles. Jellies, jams, and preserves were big things. The only jam that they made around here was some kind of apple butter, which was kind of a jam.

Singleton: What about honey?

Armstrong: They had a man somewhere out in [this direction] who had bees, and he would come through and sell honey; or you could drive up there and get the honey. Nobody around here had the nerve to go the honey route,

and I doubt seriously if Reason Jones ever had honey unless somebody that moved to the area bought these. Wild honey...right now there are three trees [down here] with bee hives in them, that you would not get me around. I know they are there, and I give them plenty of respect. They were just honeybees that people had their hives. They get vicious when you get close. If they had any honey, it was strictly if anybody had the nerve to go in and smoke the bees out and rob the hives.

We bought sugar by the sackful. I remember Dad talking about his grandmother, the second wife [over here in that house], of being...she couldn't pass by the sugar bowl without taking a taste. He'd make the comment that she never could get enough sugar, so you have to wonder if they didn't have sugar, just enough to cook with. Where they got their sugar, I guess, was wherever they bought their house staples.

Singleton: Where did you get your salt?

Armstrong: Salt came from the same place. Mine always

came in a round box, but Mother...I remember the salt bag. It was real coarse-textured. I can remember a salt box that sat on my grandmother's...it had little indentation on it. I can remember that setting on the table.

Some of these supplies had to come in by train years and years ago. Coffee probably came in the same way. We had a fire. A lot of our things burned in our house. Mother used to buy the coffee beans, even after you could get it them already ground. They never did drink a lot of coffee. My father never learned to drink coffee. My mother learned to drink it. But I know they had coffee. Mary Jones had one of those big, blue granite coffee pots that she made her coffee in every morning, so I know they had coffee. That's who Mother learned to drink coffee from.

Singleton: Did people drink a lot of lemonade?

Armstrong: I guess if they had the lemons. Those were probably very uncommon.

Renner: Cider?

Armstrong: Cider that came from over in town. Mainly, it was the Germans who made apple cider. This was in the fall. Mother remembered her dad drinking apple cider. They had kind of a trade days [over there]. It was north of the square. My grandpa was a bit of truck farmer, and he raised a lot of vegetables and things. He would take his things in, and other people would bring their things in. Rather than buying, a lot of trading went on. You would trade [this] for [that]. A lot of that went on. I have a next-door neighbor who said he could remember that they always tried to find out when Mr. Elmer was going to be in town with his watermelons, because they would make a point to be in town.

Who knows? His family could have been selling home brew. They'd go to their cellar a lot. Home brew was a big item [out here]. Now, my dad and his brothers built a still. I think that was one wintertime project--building a still. They had a

little problem with it blowing up or doing something. The home brew was also something else that was kept in the cellar. I can remember a lot of home brew being made, the crocks setting around in the corner of the house.

Singleton: Do you know what they made it out of?

Armstrong: It was malt; it took sugar. I don't remember what all they put in home brew. Barley was what they used. Before we left here, they were putting it in dark beer bottles.

Singleton: I thought maybe some people were putting it in fruit jars.

Armstrong: The fruit jars were before that. When I was little, I remember that Mother and Dad used to have a lot of parties, and the home brew would come out. My brother and I used to go in drinking the dredge, sludge, whatever they called it from the bottom. You could drink that. We used to go in and drink that. Mother said they would find us, and we would be asleep under a chair or whatever and out of their way the rest of



the night because we had been draining everybody's jar. I guess about two years before we left here was when they started bottling it, and then there was always the entertainment with the bottles blowing up, putting it up when it was still green. I remember that happening one year when it was in the jars. We couldn't have gone in the cellar if we had wanted to because it smelled so bad because a lot jars blew up down there. There was always home brew.

Singleton: Were there a lot of other people in the area that did home brew?

Armstrong: Yes. You could buy all the supplies at Pilot Point. My brother made home brew for a project in high school. I guess it was in chemistry class. He made some home brew in our bathroom, and, of course, Dad remembered well how to do it.

The only hard drink I saw on the place was the wine. I saw a bottle of rye one time, and my association with rye at the time was something you'd eat. I couldn't understand it being in a bottle. I was

little. I went and asked my mother, and she said, "Where did you see that?" It was over in the blacksmith shop where I saw it. But as far as a bottle of whiskey or anything like that, I don't ever remember seeing any when I was a kid. In later, years I did, but it was always wine.

Renner: Was that locally produced?

Armstrong: Yes, that was sold locally. I can take you to four houses still standing in Pilot Point that I remember going to a lot. We sat in the car and waited. Really, back then the blacks were most of our wine producers and bootleggers. The Germans, what wine they made, they drank. They didn't really bootleg. Well, one did. George Schoener bootlegged it. He is still living. I remember going to his house a lot. Mainly it was the blacks who made the wine.

There were trips to Fort Worth when the cattle were hauled, and I never knew what all came back. I knew a lot of stuff came back on those trips, but I just never

saw a lot of it. It was kind of miserable after being around for a while. The wine they sold mostly around here was white, and it would knock the top of your head off. I didn't go around draining anybody's glass who had been drinking it. It was a bitter, strong wine.

Cokes, Dr Peppers...the only thing I remember drinking out of the bottle out here was Uncle Joe's. It was a chocolate drink in a bottle. That's the only thing like that. I don't remember how old I was until I saw the first Coke bottle, because we drank fountain Cokes in the drugstore. We just didn't buy cold drinks like that. Uncle Joe's I got off the iceman.

Singleton: What about tea?

Armstrong: Yes, tea was practically a year-round drink out here. I guess it is probably why there weren't any coffee drinkers, because of the tea. I can remember extra trips being made to town for ice, not the women but the men. Somebody went to town for the ice, and I guess it was because of the tea. Hot tea

was...if it was real cold, I can remember hot tea being on this place. I was always surprised that a lot of the kids that I grew up with through junior high and high school had never had hot tea. We drank hot tea, hot chocolate.

Chocolate and peppermint was a big item out here. I can always remember chocolate cakes, fudge, and peppermint candy. Other than that, I don't remember any other kinds of candy. The iceman started bringing--and that was the last summer we were here--three-colored coconut bars, which were red, white, and brown. I guess that was the first bought candy I had eaten. Well, I take that back. I used to eat "Guess Whats." I would get a quarter on Saturday and go to the movie. I don't guess they had popcorn because I don't remember eating any. Dad would go to the drugstore and get an ice cream sandwich and then go down to the store and get my "Guess Whats." It was candy wrapped inside, with some little gimmicky prize inside. They

were a penny apiece. They were called "Guess Whats."

Singleton: Where did you go to the movies?

Armstrong: Pilot Point. We liked the serials. You would go on Saturday afternoons so you could see the serials. We used to go occasionally at night, but very rarely did we go at night. If I went, I usually went with my aunt and uncle. My father probably saw ten movies in his whole life there, and only saw one he really liked. But on Saturday I would go to the movies by myself. It was a small town, and Mother would just take me in there and leave me. When you got out of there, I would pick up the *Life* magazine, because during the war magazines came in. They had a limited supply. You didn't subscribe for the magazine. They came into the drugstore, and you were on a list there. They wrote your name on a magazine, and you picked it up there. The *Life* magazine was the magazine during World War II.

Then you walked around the square the

rest of the time--bunch of little girls arm-in-arm, around and around. Mother said they did the same thing when she was a kid. They walked around and around the square. They didn't go to town every Saturday when she was a kid--about once a month. She said she walked around the square then, so things didn't change much.

Renner: Was there any traffic on the creeks or river? Was that used for transportation then?

Armstrong: No, not up this far. We asked about that. I guess when we were taking geography in grade school sometime back and reading about Buffalo Bayou. I remember we asked my grandfather if he ever knew of any boat trade coming up on these creeks. He got the biggest kick out of it because he said, "How in the world would boats ever get through all the brush and all this?" We thought, "How dumb to have asked!" You look at them now, and sometimes there is some water in them. There is a puddle [down in there]. Then, when there is water

in them, it usually means it's flooded, and you have trees and everything else in them. I always wanted to get in a canoe and canoe from [up here] on Highway 372 down to where Isle du Bois and Elm Fork run into each other. This is something that I have wanted to do before it disappeared. I have talked to several people, and they said it couldn't have been done because of the brush.

Singleton: We thought there could be some sawmills or something like that along the creek.

Armstrong: No. There was a house on [this] dirt road south of here. There was an old, funny-looking little house setting off Highway 372. At one time that was a sawmill, but it was for local use.

Singleton: Southeast of here?

Armstrong: Yes. I can remember it being there. It was just a man who came in, and he leased the house and land and turned it into a sawmill. He brought in some equipment for it.

Singleton: Do you know when?

Armstrong: It was in the 1940s. It's like Dad said. He cut about one size of lumber, and that was about it. He cut the trees and hauled them up there. Singer--the sewing machine people--came through here in the 1930s, so it must have been in the 1930s. Singer bought most of all those trees on the creek. He cut it so they could ship it in trains, and they were going to turn it into veneer for cabinets. He cut it into one-size planks so he could ship them easier. They hauled them all up there. But everything else was for local use.

This woman that used to live in [this] house, she was a Vaughn. She was a Jones and married a Vaughn. That is an interesting house over there. It has been a well-kept house.

Singleton: This is the just west of here?

Armstrong: It's kind of a two-story house. Her granddaughter now lives there. That house has been here a lot of years and has seen a lot of history. I think the girl's father probably knows quite a bit about it. He is



about my age. Dr. Shipley...it wasn't his place, but it was a relation to him. There has been a lot of history on it. It is amazing how these young kids like to live out in the country.

The only industry out of Pilot Point was the cotton gin. By the time I came along, the refinery was gone. They had a big refinery that was connected to these...when they found oil out here, they built the refinery, and that was when they first paved the streets. That was the big industry back then, and there were several...do you ever get over to Pilot Point?

Renner: Occasionally.

Armstrong: Where Axtell Pharmacy is? It's in the Tri-Medical Building now, out on the south end of town. They have a picture of the town. It is an interesting picture, and I don't know how they took them like that. It is a real long picture of Pilot Point when a lot of old houses were still standing. You can see the depot and what industry was in town

at the time. It looked like it was booming. The square wasn't paved. The old fountain in the drugstore is interesting. It has been around for about one hundred years. The fountain was moved from the old drugstore. I took mother in there not long ago to show it to her, and she pointed out what most things were there, but I have forgotten what industry they had. The depot sat north of Highway 455. Mother was born in 1905, and they used to get on the train and go up into Oklahoma to visit a sister. She used to go to Farmers Branch, Lake Dallas, and Aubrey to visit her relatives.

In 1920 her appendix ruptured. They were living just due east of the old Bloomfield School at the time. They put her on the train and sent her to Dallas with a ruptured appendix. She stayed in the hospital for a month. I guess she survived it. She also had infantile paralysis when she was a baby. I think it is interesting that she even survived.

Singleton: Were there a lot of major epidemics?

Armstrong: Mother said that when she had that, two other kids had it, and they died. All of them were babies. So, they considered it an epidemic, but it only hit the babies. It didn't hit the young kids. They didn't call it polio; it was infantile paralysis. Mother always said she survived because her mother was so damned stubborn, and she wouldn't let her die. They ran her to town and took her picture because she was supposed to die. You can see in the picture how sickly she looked. Her right side has always been affected by it. She has never had any coordination on her right side. She should have limped because she has curvature of the spine, but for that long ago, there was never any treatment or anything. She was never taken to the city or anything. The doctor diagnosed it.

They had an epidemic of typhoid fever. Mother's sister had it and lost all of her hair. Mother and her other sister were sent to live with somebody during all of

this. This is the sister who just turned ninety that had it. A lot of the drinking water here, if it wasn't well water, you were apt to get typhoid. East of town there were two or three men who died from drinking from a water tank, and it was typhoid. They were on a threshing crew and got water out of the tank.

Of course, the flu epidemic, you can go out to the cemetery and see the year. I think 1918. You can walk through the cemetery and see that it hit this area like it did everywhere.

Singleton: Smallpox epidemic?

Armstrong: Not that I ever heard.

Renner: Any livestock epidemics?

Armstrong: No, not those where you have to get rid of your cattle. After we left my grandfather bought some cattle in Fort Worth that had some kind of disease, and I know that somebody from the government came everytime you got ready to sell cattle. He tested for years, it seemed like, before he could sell anything. I don't know if \_\_\_\_\_

disease or what it was. He did get something in his herd that wasn't really killing them...well, he changed them out so fast. But I guess it wasn't too serious because he got rid of most of that herd. He may have had to take some of them and shoot them.

We had a little epidemic here ten years ago. They never did know what it was. Cattle was just dropping like flies down in the bottom, and their first thought was that it was frost on the Johnson grass, but they weren't bloated like they should have. They bloat when they do that. The only test that came back from Texas A&M was something about some kind of deficiency. It wasn't a food deficiency. It was a deficiency in the cattle. It wasn't a widespread epidemic; it was just in this herd.

I can remember blue bugs nearly wiping out our chickens. You had to stay on top of that. That is just a natural thing. I burned a little chicken house. It is

another building that had been moved. My father built it down at the other place, and they moved it [up here] when we moved. I know it had not been sprayed for blue bugs in about forty-four years, and I just kind of leaned on it, and it fell over and started burning. I was doing fine until I got the roof part pulled on. It was the most acrid, black smoke. We used to put kerosene and this old oil and everything else in the chicken houses for the blue bugs, and I guess the ceiling tin had been protecting it, and it hadn't dried out. The sides were fine, but I had black smoke just boiling. Boy! It was a bad smell! I know it hadn't been sprayed in at least forty-six years. I was standing [out here] debating on whether to tear it down or not. It leaned a little heavy, and it just collapsed. My husband was mowing out here, and he said, "Well, I guess that made up your mind real quick."

A church out here was Mountain Springs Church. It was quite a little trip to the

church. Reason Jones was one of the charter members of it. That was quite a trip to the church. From what I understand, as long as Mother was well, she went every Sunday. There has never been a church closer, except they did use Bloomfield School some for a church. If there was preacher that came, it was church that Sunday. Usually, you just heard by word-of-mouth if there was going to be one in the area, and sometimes they would stay for a while.

Singleton: Did they have their Bibles?

Armstrong: Yes, they had their Bibles at Bloomfield for your traveling preachers. Most things were centered around the church. Every Thanksgiving they used to have a big Thanksgiving meal. You cooked for your family and just took it up there, and they just put it all around on the table instead of having Thanksgiving at home. They used to have other things at Bloomfield School Building. I have been to funerals there before.

Singleton: What would they do if there wasn't a preacher?

Armstrong: By the time I came along, there was always preachers. I don't know what they did before. I guess they just got a traveling preacher out. My grandfather's sister died when she was eighty, I guess, and we were digging around not long ago and found this death notice that you put on the door--big, black border with a black satin bow on it. So, I guess they had a preacher that came from town, but I think the Mount Pleasant Church always had a preacher there. It was like going to the doctor. I guess when you needed one, you found him, or one would show up.

Singleton: Who maintained the Jones Cemetery?

Armstrong: Nobody. Did you see it when they moved it? They had an association, and for years my grandfather and father and his brothers maintained it. The cows would knock the fence down. It consisted of about two acres, and he would send them down to clean it up and set the stones back where they



thought they ought to go--stones that didn't have any names on them, or did have, and the cows had knocked them around. Dad said they went down and second-guessed where somebody might be buried and put the stones back and cleaned it up. We lived not too far from it.

I would say my father had more to do with it than anybody, because after we left it got to where you couldn't walk through for the briars. I remember one time they burned it off. We were down here one Easter, and they burned it off. After we came back, I think Roy was the president of the Jones Cemetery Association, and "Casey" Jones was the secretary. With as many descendants that Reason Jones had, I've often wondered why we didn't get together and have an all-day clean-up and a meal. I even offered to pay for a caterer, but nobody was interested. They said that it was going to have to be moved, anyway. This was in 1974. So, it remained grown up. I only went into it in the wintertime.

In the summertime there were mosquitoes, and they would carry you off. I took a woman in it one day, and the mosquitoes were thick. I was busy looking for copperheads and water moccasins. I took her on up to the Bloomfield Cemetery, which was well maintained all through the years and saw two snakes. They were just black racers. I guess I just couldn't see them at Jones Cemetery.

There has always been a cemetery association at the Bloomfield Cemetery, and people send money. They have a meeting once a year, and you put your money in a bucket. Ever since we have been back, Dolph Burch has maintained that cemetery, and he has maintained the new one. Jones Cemetery now is blade clean--first time in years--and I'm not there anymore.

Singleton: Who started the Jones Cemetery?

Armstrong: As far as we know, the oldest grave I found on it...and there's no telling how old it is--old clay rocks with names scratched on it. The oldest person I could find buried

in there was 1851, and the name was Austin. I was in high school one day and was digging around in there and found that. When we moved back, I was down there trying to find that stone. It is just another rock now because I went to the same corner where I'd last seen it. Reason Jones's first wife was buried there in 1859. When they first started on that cemetery and finding who all was buried there, they gave me a map of it. I have found 200-and-something graves, I believe, and very few were known. Of course, after they decided to move it, more and more people showed up and pointed out spaces and all. So, there's no telling how old it was. It just happened to be on Reason Jones's property, and it became Jones Cemetery. That is where he was buried, and both wives, some kids. Roy's parents were buried there. I guess his grandparents were buried there, also. No, they were buried in Strickland Cemetery.

Singleton: Have you ever heard of the Kendrick

Cemetery?

Armstrong: No, I never have.

Singleton: It's down near Highways 455 and 372.

Armstrong: I didn't know about one [down here] just north and a little bit west on Mount Pleasant Church. It's on a little dirt road that kind of cuts from the farm-to-market road to another dirt road. Since we have moved back, I bet I have been able to use that road twenty times and never saw that cemetery until somebody in Cooke County came out with a cemetery map, and it mentioned this one. I thought I had never seen a cemetery there, so Mother and I jumped in the car and ran down there and drove slow, and I guess that's why I saw it. It is a little family cemetery--just a few stones.

Singleton: It's still there?

Armstrong: Just a little cemetery. I don't remember what it's called. It doesn't have a name, except in the book. It's on the north side of the road. There are some houses up in there now.

Singleton: By the church?

Armstrong: No, you go up one road past the church. It's a dirt road. You take a left, and it will be on your right. There is an old house, brick house, on the left. It's kind of at the top of the hill over on your right. It's kind of like the Jones Cemetery was--you just would catch glimpses of stones.

Singleton: I imagine there are quite a few small family cemeteries.

Renner: What kinds of medicines did your parents and grandparents use?

Armstrong: As I said, my grandfather used the Tioga water. I remember Watkins products being around my grandmother's house--Watkins cough syrup. I guess it was just store-bought aspirin that she had. I remember what the medicine bottles used to look like, and that's why we were so interested in trying to find where they dumped the trash. The Reason Jones family, which lived [over there]...because I know they found his medicine bottles, things like

that. Where did he dump the trash? We think we finally found out because one of the...I don't remember prescription medicine being on [this] place [over here] unless it was a bottle of cough syrup that had the sticker on it. It was a white bottle that had red cough syrup in it.

Singleton: Did they have things like bitters or sasparillas?

Renner: Did they have home remedies?

Armstrong: Yes, they had home remedies. The home remedy for cough syrup was kerosene and sugar; that was the croup remedy. I liked it so well I just went out and drank some kerosene--me and my little cousin. He did it later than me. I don't know why we drank kerosene, but we did. In that case it was just making a flying trip into town. Mother was filling lamps and left the can sitting on the porch, and I took a big ol' swig and started turning black. We made this wild trip into town. Mother said everytime I was make a sound, Daddy would drive a little faster. They went to the

drugstore. We didn't even go to the doctor's office; we went to the drug store. He gave me \_\_\_\_\_, which is still what you use. I remember seeing bitters bottles, all kinds of salves in little cans. The home remedies were always the cough syrup, croup medicine. If you got a bad cut, you got turpentine poured on it for relief. For a deep cut, or if you stepped on a nail, you had turpentine poured in it. I did not have a tetanus shot until I was in my thirties. They used to pour turpentine in everything. I guess I remember the croup medicine better than anything on the home remedies. For earaches Mother would put salt in them. She kept salt in a little bag, and you threw it on top of the wood heater and let it heat; and then you would put that up against your ear. That was supposed to take care of your earache. You did feel good for a little while.

Singleton: What about toothaches?

Armstrong: I just don't remember anybody having a toothache. I assume they had something for

it--probably the whiskey bottle. I just don't remember any tooth problems.

Renner: Did you grow anything in the garden that was medicinal rather than edible?

Armstrong: No, we ate everything that came out of the garden. Mother wasn't into the herbs and spices or things like that. She just grew spearmint. That was the only spice that she grew.

Singleton: What about medicine for the horses?

Armstrong: They used to have a shelf that he kept all of that on, and then he moved it up to the porch. He had a little cabinet that he built and put all of that in. I don't know why he moved it. It could have been that it was getting hot out there. What we called horse remedies and salves...he had one salve for cuts and bruises. The liniment, he used that on one ol' horse named "Old Baldy." The only horse I can remember being a pet [out there] was one horse named \_\_\_\_\_. Then you just didn't worm cattle and things like you do now. Now you line them up and worm them and all.



All they did with that chute out there was turn bulls into steers and brand them. Now they have these that tube things that you poke down their throat, and they're wormed. They didn't do that back then. The turkeys, back in the 1930s somebody convinced them--it was probably from some *Progressive Farmer* magazine--convinced all these people that they could get rich raising turkeys. My aunt and mother got turkeys. Mother's first bunch of turkeys stood out in the rain one day, and they all drowned, literally drowned. My aunt lost most of hers to copperheads and other snakes. So, the next year they decided they would try it again. Everytime it would come of a cloud, Dad said of Mother, "Here she would go, gathering turkeys in." Mother got to noticing every snake that was around. One turkey would spot it and let out this noise, and all the other turkeys would come and stand around it. So, she decided that if they stand out in rainstorms and look up with their mouths

open and drown and then find a copperhead and announce it to all the others--"Let's see who will get bitten out of this bunch"--she said the next year she would not try turkeys anymore. My aunt decided the same thing, so they went out of the turkey business in a hurry. She said they are very ignorant animals. Yes, she said it wasn't hard to find snakes when she was out trying to round them up. They found it and announced to all the others.

Singleton: Did they hang out in the area between the house and the fence?

Armstrong: They were supposed to stay around close to the house. Turkeys are so large that you either have to put up a big fence or...Dad clipped the wings off of most of them, and some he missed. When you have a hundred turkeys, you kind of lose track of which ones you clipped and which you don't; and they usually ended up out strolling around. Coyotes used to not be so bad around here, but they were bad at times. They always came home at night. Mother said she didn't

lose any to coyotes or anything. My grandfather's dog wiped out a few, but she said she really didn't lose very many to wild animals. She said they stayed close. She could always see them. My aunt's turkeys always hung out around the barn and roosted in the barn, so she really didn't have to chase hers down. When it came up rain, they got in the barn. Mother had to put hers in the shed. I guess it was so warm in there they didn't want to go in there. As far as keeping them fenced in, she didn't. They decided that they could not get rich from turkeys.

Singleton: Do you remember any outlaws?

Armstrong: Nope. Well, yes, you have to get down to Bonnie [Parker] and Clyde [Barrow]. Just outside of Pilot Point, there's a big hill out on Highway 455. There is a house on top of the hill on the south side of the road. There used to be a two-story house. Clyde's uncle lived there, and it takes my aunt to tell the story. Mother and Dad and all of them claim that they used come here

occasionally and stay with him. Nobody ever bothered them, and they never bothered anybody. My aunt and her husband-to-be were dating, and they had been in Pilot Point, and he was bringing her home and took her on Highway 455, which then was a dirt road. This big car--she said what kind of car it was, and it was yellow--pulled up and drove right next to them for probably about a 100 or 150 yards, and it was Clyde and Bonnie. She said then they just dropped back and turned around and turned back up into that house. She said Fred just kept driving and looking straight ahead. But they claimed they used to come stay with him some. The sheriff at the time was Hardwick, and he was worse than them, so he certainly didn't bother them. He was more of an outlaw than them. But as far as any "outlaw outlaws" back then, I have never heard of any. The Gainesville hanging, this Reason Jones was in on.

Renner: Was there any cattle rustling or horse thieving?

Armstrong: Yes. The story goes that he did not serve in the Civil War, and he stayed behind and took care of the widows or the women left behind. My mother has a sarcastic comment about that. At the end of the Civil War...he had a lot of cattle, and supposedly during the Civil War, Indians stole a lot of cattle from places where there weren't any men. Reason Jones always said that it was not the Indians; it was the local people who stole the cattle.

[Tape ends abruptly]

