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Ken: So here we are. I'm with Betty Henry on August the 9th, I believe it is, a Thursday. She lives in Cedar Park

Henry: 80 years.

Ken: 80 years All but two years.

Henry: Well, I'm actually going to be eighty three in September, so, I've lived here eighty years

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And two, one in Jarell, and one in Johnson City.

Ken: I see. And you married in 1946 and your husband is a rancher and

Henry: Yeah, Artie.L. Henry.

Ken: Artie. L. Henry.

Henry: And, uh, Vista Ridge Middle School is named after him.

Ken: Oh, congratulations. He must have been a outstanding citizen

Henry: Well, he wasn't in the academic field but he founded the Volunteer Fire Department in Cedar Park

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, we were very active in that, and then, of course, we supported the activities that the kids had having on the grocery store.

Ken: Did you have children in school at the time?

Henry: I did. I have, uh, no, not at that time. I have two children. A boy and a girl. And, uh, my grandchildren, my great grandchildren, and my children, all graduated from Leander High.

Ken: I see.

Henry: Now I have great grandchildren going there.

Ken: I see. Wonderful.

Henry: Uh, my son lives up on the hill and my daughter lives in Buda with three grandchildren in eight greats and one little girl.

Ken: So, you went to, uh, you went to school in Cedar Park as a young girl?

Henry: Yeah, I went there at Whitestone.

Ken: Where was Whitestone located?

Henry: Whitestone is, there's a Mexican place there. It's where 1431 connects with, uh, 183

Ken: Yes

Henry: On the west side

Ken: Yes

Henry: There's a Mexican food place, and, uh, at that time it was Whitestone School. I started there when I was five years old.

Ken: How many grades went to school there?

Henry: Uh, I believe we had seven. And then we went to Leander. And, uh, of course, I graduated from there. And my sisters, two sisters and a brother graduated from there, so, we've been around a long time.

Ken: You have, good! Well this is wonderful because you're the first person I've talked to from Cedar Park. And I've talked to people from Liberty Hill and around, but, uh, Cedar Park seems to be, have been the center of the, of the cedar industry back in the '40s and '50s.

Henry: Well, I think we had more cedar here than they did anywhere else. And, uh, the first cedar yard was around – I made myself some notes so I wouldn't forget what, what I was gona tell ya. Around 1937, owned by a Mr. John Jackson.

Ken: All right.

Henry: And it was, uh, somewhere in the area close to New Hope Church.

Ken: Yes

Henry: And there were not very many people around here, in Cedar Park. Uh, Artie's mother and father lived there, but at one time there were eighteen people who lived there. And the man did a good business and that's when the other cedar choppers decided they'd start cutting cedar. Like I said, my husband worked at the rock quarry when we married. But then, uh, a couple years later he started cuttin' cedar. He had a truck with a little flatbed on it and he could go out there and stay three hours and earn more money – he could make seventy five dollars in about three hours, cuttin' cedar. [later called and said \$/day wrong. cut 60-70 posts 6x4" .

Ken: Is that right!

Henry: Yeah. So, everybody started cuttin' cedar.

Ken: And this is with an axe?

Henry: With an axe.

Ken: 1940...

Henry: It would be about '48 or '49, 'cause we were married in '46 and he did work at the rock quarry some. But he could make more money cuttin' cedar than he could working at the quarry. And that was the only two things that you could work around here. That's all we had.

Ken: I wonder what the rock quarry paid back then. Do you have idea?

Henry: I don't know. Uh,

Ken: It, it wouldn't be, it wouldn't be five dollars a day, would it? Or, would it be, I mean

Henry: Oh, yeah, it would be more than that.

Ken: It would be more than that?

Henry: Yeah, in the '40s it would be more than that. Uh, I know a lady who was a secretary up there. I can get answers to some questions that, that you have and maybe call you and tell ya.

Ken: All right.

Henry: Uh, she's still alive. And, uh, lives in Pflugerville. So you want to know what they earned at the rock quarry. [later she calls and says quarry wages were \$1.05 an hour in the early 1940s]

Ken: I'm just kind-of curious because, that's the first I heard that cedar could be as lucrative, more lucrative than a good paid job.

Henry: Well, of course, cedar was paid according to how long the posts were and how big around, their circumference.

Ken: Yes

Henry: And, uh, there was a tremendous amount of cedar here. They didn't have to maybe work in an area bigger than this room to get a load.

Ken: I see

Henry: And as, as they went to these different cedar yards, a lot of times the owner would contract with them to bring him all of their posts and he gave 'em a little additional money.

Ken: I see

Henry: And, uh, that first one, I told ya, I think was in about 1937. And that was John Jackson.

Ken: John Jackson.

Henry: Then we had the Minnick, Boatright, King, Turner, and Reed.

Ken: That's six cedar yards in all, then.

Henry: Yeah. I don't know when Mr. Jackson went out. He was an older person, but, uh, uh, yeah, and they were all very busy. And when they got an excess of, of cedar they sold their cedar to West Texas.

Ken: Yes

Henry: The trucks, those big eighteen wheelers would come in, and, uh, load up. And, I know that to be a fact because my son had been stackin' cedar on a place where he lived. And I've seen the eighteen wheelers come in there

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: and buy a load of it. But, of course, nothing had been done to the cedar around here, you know, it takes a while for a cedar tree to get that big.

Ken: Yes

Henry: But, uh, there were stands of it that, like I say, they could just, if he worked hard and used that axe, you could make money.

Ken: Was your husband a particularly big man? Or a

Henry: Oh, he was, uh, six two

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, in those days, thin.

Ken: Yes

Henry: But, uh

Ken: You don't happen to have any pictures of that truck, or of, of, uh, him with an axe or anything like that?

Henry: I don't. We call that old truck a "hoopie."

Ken: A hoopie? Why is that?

Henry: H double-O P I E. I don't know. That's just what we named it.

Ken: (laugh)

Henry: That he hauled cedar on.

Ken: (laugh)

Henry: Left in a pasture somewhere and probably just, you know, disintegrated.

Ken: What is that truck that you have out front here?

Henry: Oh, that was just a truck that, we lived across the road in that older house,

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: The Shelton place, for eighteen years, and it was there, and when we moved over here we moved it. And I decorate it every Christmas.

Ken: I see.

Henry: I put running lights on the wheels

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: Candles on the running board – on the fenders. And I get a lot of compliments. I have pictures of it, but I don't have any of that old Hoopie. We couldn't afford cameras back then.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And film. A lot of people did, but, uh, we were scratching to get by. And, and then, uh, we owned a lot of property in Cedar Park at one time, we've sold it, but he cut cedar and paid for it – parcel by parcel.

Ken: Paid off that land.

Henry: Um-hum. Uh, all of it was on the west side of the railroad track in Cedar Park. We currently own the oldest standing building in Cedar Park, which is over a hundred and thirty nine years old. Uh, this side of the first grocery store, the first post office, and the first church. And it is the railroad section foreman's house. But the City of Cedar Park is not interested in it.

Ken: Hum.

Henry: At any price.

Ken: That's too bad.

Henry: It is, because it (phone ringing) excuse me – it is the history of Cedar Park. (phone ringing still – then stops.) OK. And you know that, I'm sure somebody's already told you that the government did pay landowners to clear their land of cedar.

Ken: Yes, I've heard that. Do you know the years that that happened?

Henry: How many years?

Ken: What years, during what years they paid people?

Henry: I don't really know.

Ken: I'll find out.

Henry: You can find out with the Conservation Office. But I know we cleared some here behind, where this house is now, it wasn't here then. And they used two tractors with a chain and they would just uproot those cedar trees and pile 'em in long piles, and leave a space, and then we burned 'em.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: My husband did some of the burning. But I, I didn't. You know, I didn't record that, so I don't really know.

Ken: How many years did your husband, uh, cut cedar?

Henry: Well, let's see – I'd have to think about that. Uh, he was a ranch foreman and I would think that he probably cut cedar ten years.

Ken: 1947 to 1957?

Henry: Um-hum. And, uh, oh, somewhere in that area -

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: about ten years.

Ken: Do you think the cedar was playing out then? Were you start – do you recall that the late '50s, were there fewer yards, or were they not as busy?

Henry: Oh, yeah. There were fewer yards. Uh, in the late '50s, uh, they were just about all gone. The yards were, because, you know, like I say, everybody was cutting cedar because it was either that or the rock quarry

Ken: yes

Henry: if you worked around here. And, uh, we had access to much cedar because he worked for Will Wilson, the Attorney General

Ken: Yes

Henry: And, uh, he gave us the land for this house, but, uh, then he had a lot of land from here to 1431. And, uh, that cedar was beautiful. You're talking about, some of those cedar trees, and the posts, you know, so, uh, it, it was easy to get to for us because he leased the land and they allowed him to cut the cedar.

Ken: Yes

Henry: and they didn't have to give him any of it. He kept it all.

Ken: Isn't that interesting that you say it's beautiful. Because now, of course, a cedar brake is just these small little narly trees.

Henry: Well, back then though, they were big trees.

Ken: Yes

Henry: Tall, and they'd been there, I guess, hundreds of years.

Ken: Yes

Henry: I don't know how long. And, uh, we just, we just thought they were beautiful.

Ken: Yes

Henry: Now then, if you leave them, little cedars there, in a few years it's covered.

Ken: You can't even walk through.

Henry: No. But it's, it's not, uh, worth anything.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: Just little scrub cedars.

Ken: And back then you could, could you walk right through the brake? There were, there were no limbs down at the low level?

Henry: Yeah, you could do a lot of that. Yeah

Ken: I heard one man describe it like a cathedral. He said it was so, uh, high, the canopy was so high above you, he thought, and it was very quiet, that it reminded him of a cathedral.

Henry: Well, we did a lot of driving around. We had an old Jeep and when I'd come in from work my husband I would just drive around through the pastures and we enjoyed that type of thing. And, uh

Ken: My wife and I do that on our four wheeler.

Henry: There was uh, a particular place back here, what we called The Homar Place, and it, it was just beautiful like that and, of course, uh, you know, they would make a, a fire brake along the fence. So you had a place to drive.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: But, uh, it was pretty.

Ken: Have you seen any of that old growth cedar still left anywhere? I would love to see some.

Henry: There would be some in the Lueschmann. Because as far as I know, not anybody ever cut that.

Ken: Where is that?

Henry: Have you ever heard of Fritz Robertson? He was a tax person in Austin, I believe.

Ken: Perhaps.

Henry: He passed away, but his son, Lamar Robinson would have access to some of that.

Ken: What did you call the place, the

Henry: Well, it was a, actually the Loeschmann, L O E S C H M A N N. I don't have his telephone number, but, uh, he'll be, I'm sure, in the telephone book.

Ken: OK. Here in Cedar Park?

Henry: It's between here and Cedar Park.

Ken: I would love – I'll call him up and just ask him if I can take a look at that.

Henry: I'm sure he, oh he's a fine person. I don't know exactly – when you came down the road did you see the, on that side of the road, did you see the Muslim?

Ken: No, I came from Parmer. Is it on – I was looking to the left, though.

Henry: Yeah, you would come from Parmer, but it's on the other side of Parmer.

Ken: OK. I can go back that way.

Henry: Yeah. There is a Muslim ... has a big sign right on the road.

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Henry: I guess it's the temple, or houses and stuff. And, it's right before you get to that. You're dropping down a, we called it Cedar Knob Hill, but

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: You know, it's not much there anymore because they've redone the road, but, uh, if you call Lamar I think that he would let you come.

Ken: Oh, that'd be nice.

Henry: Tell him what you're doing.

Ken: So, so the business really slowed down in the 19, late 1950s?

Henry: Um-hum

Ken: Were the yards closing up?

Henry: Uh, gradually.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: You know, because there just wasn't that much cedar to go around, you know

Ken: They just ran out of cedar

Henry: Yeah

Ken: is that the main reason?

Henry: Just about. Like I say, there's still some on that place, but as far as I know they've never let anybody cut it.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And we always worried about a fire in that area.

Ken: Of course, yes.

Henry: But, uh, never have known one in there. We've just been lucky. Nobody, you know, ever threw anything in there and started it. But it would've gone up like wildfire.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: I know they have sold part of that, but, uh, I believe there'd be areas where they'd still have the cedar. Uh,

Ken: If you had to guess, uh, of all those yards, I've always tried to get a feel for how many people would bring a load of cedar in. Your husband would bring in one load a day, pretty much?

Henry: Pretty much. Yeah

Ken: And, that, was it on a small, was it on a small flatbed truck?

Henry: Yeah

Ken: Your Hoopie?

Henry: Yeah, Hoopie.

Ken: What year was that truck?

Henry: Don't have a clue.

Ken: OK.

Henry: No, it was just an old shell of a

Ken: But he could cut that cedar in just a few hours, and he'd be done for the day?

Henry: Uh-huh

Ken: I bet it was, he was probably working very hard.

Henry: Very hard!

Ken: During a few hours.

Henry: Yeah. Of course, you know, you'd have to cut it, and load it, and unload it

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: So it, it, as far as the actual time cutting, it probably wasn't any more, 'cause, you know, you had a good double-bitted axe.

Ken: Yes

Henry: And, uh, but, you know, the loading, and going up there and unloading, and then you didn't even have to have the whole thing registered, you know. Just where we lived, up there, and there were, uh, two, maybe three houses between here and Cedar Park

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: You know, there were just, there weren't any people here.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And some of the cedar choppers lived in Leander, uh, uh, the family, their last name was Ward, they were real good cedar choppers. And, uh, I don't know, we have a, we have someone in our Heritage Society, his name is Preston Carlton. You've bound to have seen his signs around.

Ken: I have, and I actually talked with him yesterday on the phone.

Henry: Oh, you did?

Ken: Because I had had a couple of people recommend that, uh, I talk, well, he, I was looking at this book *Nameless*, have you seen that little book, *Nameless*, by Genny Kercheville?

Henry: Unt-uh

Ken: Genny Kercheville is a Rogers, uh, of the Rogers

Henry: Ranch

Ken: of the Sunset Ranch.

Henry: Yeah

Ken: And, uh, she is Genny Rogers. And, uh, she wrote a little book called *Nameless*, just a few years ago, that is about that community, and the Carlton's are one of the families in there. So I, I called him up and I'm gona meet with him sometime.

Henry: Uh, he still has their home place over closer to the lake.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And I'm not sure how much cedar he has on it. But somewhere around here you're bound to be able to find, uh, cedar trees that are big

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: We had one right down here on the corner of this place, but when they fixed the road they cut it down.

Ken: Hum?

Henry: And it was yay big

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: Uh, I was trying to think, of course then Mr. Wilson sold that land, the Homar Place, up there, and it turned into Breakaway Park, and airport, and big fancy houses

Ken: Oh, uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, of course, that cedar would all be gone.

Ken: Was the King yard the biggest yard of 'em all? Or were they all about ... were they all pretty big?

Henry: Well you didn't have to have much of an area to have a cedar yard, you know

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: You know how they stacked it?

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And, uh, I would hesitate to say which one was the biggest. I know the Boatright yard was big. And there is a Boatright still living. His daddy had the yard, so you might would like to talk to him sometime. His name is John Boatright.

Ken: And he lives – I have his name. He lives in Liberty Hill

Henry: Yeah

Ken: I believe. Yes. Do you happen to know whether I worked at the Leander post office for several years. And the postmistress there was a Ruth Boatright. A very fine woman.

Henry: Yes

Ken: Do you know her? Did you know her?

Henry: Oh, yes.

Ken: Ruth and Jim Boatright.

Henry: Right. This is Jim's brother, John.

Ken: Jim's brother - John! OK, I didn't know that relationship. I take it Jim has passed away?

Henry: Yes

Ken: I knew Ruth had passed away.

Henry: Yes, both of them.

Ken: Jim built the road to our place in 1973. There was no road into the ranch, we live on the old Whitt place, which is, but, he's a fine man.

Henry: Oh, he was, yeah. Yeah, I went to school with John, I mean Jim.

Ken: Uh-huh. And Ruth was just wonderful.

Henry: Oh, yeah. Of course, I've lived here so long, most of the old people I knew, or I do know

Ken: Yes

Henry: but, uh, not anymore.

Ken: Yes

Henry: When we had our store in 1968 we could almost call everybody by name when they came in the front door.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, you can't do that now.

Ken: No, of course not. Wasn't there a Turner, uh, ___ a Turner yard? Is that one of the names you mentioned?

Henry: No, I don't believe it was.

Ken: OK.

Henry: Did Nolan have a yard? Nolan Turner?

Ken: I, that was the name, Nolan Turner. Someone said he had a yard there at the corner of 1431 and 183. Catty-corner to that Mexican Restaurant you were talking about, with the, there is a Tiger Mart there now.

Henry: Yes

Ken: And, that, that he went into partnership with the Rogers and cut off that ranch. So all these yards, and, say, your husband, this is a, I'm an economist and I'm trying to get a sense of the numbers of how many people were cutting cedar and how many people depended on it for a living. And, so, if your husband would bring in a load every day, I wonder how many different cutters would bring a load into that same yard? You know, would he be one of ten, or one of, of five, or

Henry: Well John might be able to help you with that

Ken: Uh-huh, uh-huh

Henry: since his daddy actually had a yard.

Ken: Yeah, right

Henry: I wouldn't have any idea, but, uh, I'm sure he can tell ya.

Ken: Did you have any sense of how many, just, if there were, were there a hundred people living in Cedar Park, I mean men, uh, that would, could, you know, and how many people would be cutting cedar in this whole area?

Henry: Well, I don't believe there were a hundred men here. But, like I say, he, you didn't travel somewhere to another town for a job.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: You could work on the railroad, uh, but, you know, they hired very few people.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: here

Ken: Yes

Henry: Uh, there might be eight, seven or eight people. To maintain the tracks, but, uh, there weren't any houses here

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: you know. Of course the Clucks founded Cedar Park, but, uh

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: I'm trying to think of some---I think John would be your best bet

Ken: OK

Henry: there because he, of course Nolan Turner is dead, but, uh, uh, John probably could help ya because I'm sure he worked

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: in the yard.

Ken: But it was the biggest part of the economy here in this area

Henry: Oh, yes

Ken: along with the rock quarry.

Henry: Yes. And my dad worked in the rock quarry and he cut cedar too, but, in fact he cut his leg really bad on time.

Ken: Oh, how did that happen?

Henry: Cuttin' cedar. He came home and, and poured it full of kerosene and salt.

Ken: Did he go to the doctor then

Henry: no

Ken: have it stitched up?

Henry: no. It just healed up. It was pretty bad, but, we didn't go to the doctor for everything then. Of course we had a doctor in Leander

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: just one.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: ____ Miller. And, uh, but we think of all the houses that are here now, and on Brushy Creek Road, that old house and the Loeschmann house, three, there were about four, between, uh, here and Cedar Park. Of course they incorporated in '73. I don't know if the census would, how far back did they have the census? Do you know?

Ken: Oh, they were going back in the 1890, I've seen that census. So, I guess every ten years. Sure, I could look that up.

Henry: Yeah. But, you know, right in downtown Cedar Park, of course, we didn't call this Cedar Park then.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And I'm talking right around the railroad track. The post office, and the one little store, back at that time. There weren't a dozen houses – there weren't that many houses right in

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: what we called Cedar Park.

Ken: Um-hum. Do you recall them ever loading any cedar on the railroads and shipping it out that way?

Henry: No. I don't. But I could ask this lady that I, her daddy was the section foreman and she would've known.

Ken: Oh!

Henry: We had a, oh, what do you call it, a little side track, you know, but they just used that for, uh, rock, and, uh, feed for the hog farm.

Ken: The hog farm, yes. That was the State. The State ran that, didn't it?

Henry: Um-hum. Yeah. John worked over there too.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: John Boatright.

Ken: Were there any people who, um, in, when I grew up in Austin, there was some folks that lived out right west of Austin, in the hills. And I think that they probably cut cedar for several generations. They did not own their land, and they had kind-of a rough reputation.

Henry: Oh, yeah. Uh, would they have been the Maynards?

Ken: Well those are more like Liberty Hill. I grew up, there were some folks in Liberty Hill that had a rough reputation too.

Henry: Or the Cantrells?

Ken: Perhaps the Johns, or the, the, some folks like that. Um, Cantrells, Cantwells

Henry: Cantrells

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: There's a man who lives in Liberty Hill and, uh, let's see, what did he, his name was Lee Cantrell.

Ken: Um-hum, yes.

Henry: You know him?

Ken: I've heard of him, and I'm, I'm intending to talk to him, yes.

Henry: He's on 1869, uh just as you go out from Liberty Hill

Ken: Yes

Henry: On the left hand side of the road. And, uh, he grew up poor. Really poor. Just like we all did.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, he just amasses all this stuff, and it's all around his house. It's worse than mine. But, uh, anybody in Liberty Hill could tell ya, point out his house.

Ken: Yes, you know, I know that house, because my wife and I, it would be his mother I believe, we used to buy eggs many many years ago from the lady in that house. She lived, just the lady lived there, and I believe he lived out a little further. in any case ...

Henry: Yeah

Ken: I'm looking for, I think that must have been his mother.

Henry: Well, you know there's a few old-timers left. Now he's, he's not quite as old as I am, but, uh, uh, if anybody can tell you where a big cedar post is, he could.

Ken: (laugh) You said, you know, everybody was poor. And I sure do know that. I mean, I've just, the people that we bought our place from, they had land, but, but their house was, you know, very, there was no insulation. It was just the single boards. Uh, and I understand, everybody, everybody

Henry: yeah

Ken: lived like that.

Henry: They shiplapped the boards, then they had a piece over the crack

Ken: right. Uh, yet there seemed to be some people that were sort-of on the margins that, you know, didn't go to school, that, that their families just cut cedar, were there people like that in Cedar Park as well?

Henry: I'm sure there were, but I, uh,

Ken: Lived in tents perhaps?

Henry: Yeah. Jacksons. I know the Jacksons lived in a tent and he cut cedar, 'cause that was my uncle.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, we grew everything that we ate except coffee, sugar, and tea. We took our corn to Liber – Leander and we had ‘em, grinder there, of corn meal, and you’d take ‘em part of your corn meal to grind it.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And, uh, we canned everything.

Ken: You had a big garden?

Henry: We all had big gardens. We had to. Uh

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Henry: I think I’ve lived in ten different places just, what is now Cedar Park. My daddy was a sharecropper.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: He was a good farmer

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: But we never could get enough money ahead to buy land. He’d just work for someone else.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And, uh,

Ken: Did he sharecrop on cotton?

Henry: Oh, yeah. Cotton and corn.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: A little bit of maize once, but it wasn’t, it was just mostly cotton and corn. And we’d plant our gardens in the field. You know, you might have cantaloupe and cucumbers and stuff, big patches

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: because, uh, what you couldn’t use you shared with a neighbor.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And, uh, did, did, do you get the Impact paper?

Ken: No.

Henry: When it first came out it was wonderful. It comes out of Pflugerville and it has a lot of history of Cedar Park in there.

Ken: Oh

Henry: And, uh, of course, I was in their office in Pflugerville, they have all the copies. I can't remember when it started, but I've written some articles for it also.

Ken: I see.

Henry: Growing up, during the Depression.

Ken: Yes

Henry: And, uh, I was born in '29. So, uh, I think I've written three. My husband and his brother had a hobby of catching rattlesnakes. And, uh,

Ken: A hobby!

Henry: A hobby. Every spring, they had, of course they had to, they worked, the ranch, but, they knew where all these rattlesnake dens were

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And at one time we had three hundred and sixty something, I can't remember, in a pen behind my house up here that burned as you go into the dam.

Ken: Yes

Henry: And, uh, then, you know, they would sell 'em,

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh,

Ken: And, and the people would skin 'em and eat 'em?

Henry: We have done that, Yeah.

Ken: Uh-huh. I've heard it's good.

Henry: No. I haven't really skinned any, but when we had the store my son ran for mayor. And, we had, they had a BarB, a rattlesnake BBQ there. I didn't even taste it.

Ken: (laugh)

Henry: They say it's good (laugh)

Ken: (laugh)

Henry: But (long pause)

Ken: So what I'm hearing, everybody was cutting cedar here in this area.

Henry: yeah, like I say,

Ken: just about

Henry: Yeah. They, they cut, you know, over toward the lake, Preston Carlton's bunch. I don't know if Preston ever did or not, but I'm sure his daddy did.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: They had a lot of land and they were, they had their own cattle, they were better off than a lot of people. But, uh, of course, you know, we had the lakes to fish.

Ken: Yes

Henry: You know

Ken: In Brushy Creek. It probably was running good back then, wasn't it?

Henry: Oh, yeah, and, uh

Ken: Did it have fish in it? Did yall catch

Henry: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Uh, of course, when the fish would come up stream, there's a draw down tube for this big lake

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: and we lived in that old house over there, and my son and my husband helped build the dam

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: for the Brushy, for the lake. And Mr. Wilson owned it. So we had access to it and on August the 28th I had a holiday every year, and some friends of ours, we'd go down there and pump out that hole by the draw down tube and get catfish out of those rocks.

Ken: (laugh)

Henry: So, we lived off of the land, you might say.

Ken: Yes! For how many years? When did that, that, I mean, that is such a, and amazing thing you could do that so late into the twentieth century. Would you, you were doing that in the 19 – as late as the, well certainly in the '40s.

Henry: Oh, yeah

Ken: And probably by the '50s, by the time you had your store, that, that, that was pretty well over I guess.

Henry: Well, of course, it'd begin to, you know, people

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: came and moved in and some of the ranches sold and, uh

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: Uh, but, we were still doing that in 1946, because I lived up there where Cox School is now, between here and, and Cedar Park. And, uh, it, daddy was farming.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And then he retired and, uh, my brother had a store up 183 too. My daddy had it first, and then my brother

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And then they retired and moved up there. So by the, in the late '40s and the beginning of the '50s, everybody was doing better.

Ken: Um-hum. It was during the Depression, I guess, was the tough years.

Henry: Yeah, uh-huh

Ken: Your daddy sharecropped cotton for a while. You know, cotton was the way that so many people got cash. You were mentioning you only bought a few items. And, that bale of cotton or two that everybody would get was the way that a lot of people got their cash.

Henry: And then you scrapped.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: Had it made into mattresses.

Ken: I see.

Henry: In Taylor

Ken: So, when cotton prices, they just plummeted I think, during the Depression. Or even before

Henry: I really don't know

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: I, you know, the answer, I really don't know.

Ken: Right

Henry: But we, you know, we didn't have much, but we were happy.

Ken: Yes. Yes. And I was just thinking that perhaps cedar was, was, became the new cash crop in the Hill Country.

Henry: It did.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: It did. Of course, now when you say Hill Country, that, we don't consider Cedar Park to be in the Hill Country.

Ken: Right

Henry: But really, I guess, it probably is

Ken: It's kind of the edge

Henry: Yeah, yeah.

Ken: You know, you got the limestone, you got the cedar, and you've got the, you've got the running creeks and streams, and that's, you know, it's, I can sort-of, just the edge, go a little further east,

Henry: yes

Ken: It's definitely not.

Henry: No. But that's, used to be the farm land and so many of those now are gone.

Ken: Yes

Henry: And some of them they don't even plow

Ken: No. Right. Did you go into Austin much?

Henry: Oh, we probably went down there to have our shoes repaired

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: and, uh, oh, I would, we might have went, daddy did have a car when I was growing up. An old – some kind of an old car, and, the windows were flaps that you tied, but, uh, we didn't go very often. It was always down on Sixth Street.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: You know, we didn't have very much money.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: The day I married my daddy gave me two dollars. That was all he had.

Ken: Huh

Henry: Now that tells you.

Ken: How old were you when you married?

Henry: Sixteen. I graduated in May and married in June.

Ken: Um-hum. How many, how many children were in your graduating class?

Henry: Thirteen.

Ken: All right.

Henry: 'Cause I have a class reunion Saturday.

Ken: Is that the Leander High School?

Henry: Um-hum. Yep. Thirteen. Quite a few of them have passed away. But, uh, and I was fortunate, I was salutatorian.

Ken: Oh,

Henry: But, and studying by that old kerosene lamp was hard.

Ken: Hum

Henry: Or one bare bulb in the ceiling.

Ken: Um-hum. When did you get electricity? How old were you then?

Henry: Oh, I was probably five.

Ken: Uh-huh. That made a difference in your life, I bet.

Henry: Yeah.

Ken: Did yall get a refrigerator after that?

Henry: Not then, we still had an ice box that you had to get a thing of ice. And, uh, I don't remember when they got the first, 'cause I was small. My sisters probably would remember. But, uh, did Clara Scarbrough cover the cedar industry any?

Ken: Not at all. Not really. I talked with Linda.

Henry: Her daughter?

Ken: Yes. But, uh, no, not at all. How 'bout your water. Did you have a, did you have a pump, or a well, or a windmill, or,

Henry: Well, we had a well when I was real young. And then we had a windmill later on. And, uh, when we lived, that first place we lived was across the creek over here. And we had a well and we put a, we put a submergible pump on it. But you'd have to go down there and prime it to get water. But

Ken: Would you hand pump it? Was it a hand pump, before electricity?

Henry: Yeah

Ken: Uh-huh. So, it must have been a pretty shallow well.

Henry: It has a spring, and to my knowledge it has never gone dry.

Ken: Isn't that something!

Henry: Uh, that was a historic house. We call it The Spring House, and I've taken several tours over there. That was on the Avery land, uh, the Historical Society's been on there a couple of times. But they've just let it go, and, uh, it had the portholes to shoot through, and the spring used to come up in the bottom of that. It was two-story. But, uh, R. L. Finney, who was the, uh, head of the I.R.S., Internal Revenue, for many years, uh, re-did it, just like it was. Had a little fireplace upstairs, but, uh

Ken: Hum

Henry: It's in the middle of that Avery Ranch over there and you'd think they'd make a park out of it.

Ken: You would think they would.

Henry: They haven't

Ken: So, it must have been built way back. Maybe for Indian protection.

Henry: Yes. It was, way back, and it was in one of the history books, but, they told me it was, Mr. Finney did, but I never could find it.

Ken: Hum

Henry: I love history. But, uh, that's why I'm so upset that the City Council we had, you know, they're not interested in anything old. They just want new things. We have a new mayor, so maybe things will change.

Ken: I heard the same story out of Burnet. One of the most historic houses in Burnet, the King House, as a matter of fact, the same King that moved out and put the cedar yard in here, is not ... the City doesn't care what happens to it.

Henry: Well, that's right at five acres up there that had all those historical sites. On that one piece of property

Ken: Hum

Henry: but, you know, most little towns would jump at that.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: I offered to finance it, just, you know

Ken: Hum!

Henry: And they refused to let me put— open park in there, or, warehouses, storage buildings. It's about, really, what it's ideal suited for, but they won't give me the zoning.

Ken: Um-hum. Hum!

Henry: I believe you said you had talked to Irene Varan?

Ken: Yes

Henry: I think she's with the Historical Commission in Georgetown. I'm not sure.

Ken: I believe so, either Georgetown or Round Rock.

Henry: She's with ours too, but

Ken: OK

Henry: Uh, we had such high hopes of turning that into a, a museum, you know, a lot of people, and me included, have a lot of old things, like they have in Round Rock at the Palmer House — have you ever been there?

Ken: No, I haven't. What, what, where is that?

Henry: It's, uh, out at Old Settlers grounds.

Ken: OK

Henry: That big two story house. And, you know, they need to collect all that stuff. It's just gonna be gone.

Ken: Yes. Speaking of old stuff, do you happen to have, still have your husband's double bit cedar axe?

Henry: No.

Ken: (laugh)

Henry: At that time I didn't, didn't keep anything, but, uh, I have a, quite a bit of stuff now. That's a water bucket from a well in Cedar Park. Arties mother and dad. That long blue thing.

Ken: Really?

Henry: You've never seen a water bucket?

Ken: No.

Henry: OK. Those wells, they were 'bout this big around.

Ken: Oh, uh-huh

Henry: And you had a pulley on that, and you let it down in the well and it filled up

Ken: It's beautiful!

Henry: and then you pulled that little plunger up there to release the water.

Ken: I see. You painted it all up pretty. I didn't, that's really something.

Henry: It was just a metal color

Ken: Uh-huh. Huh!

Henry: I'm surprised that you've lived here that long and have not seen one

Ken: I've never seen one, well, maybe I saw one and never knew what it was.

Henry: knew what it was. Yeah

Ken: That makes a lot of sense, you wouldn't need a big hole. Huh!

Henry: You had a platform, not a platform, a, a form built to hold your, your pulley, you now

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: Around, pulley with a rope on it, and, uh, you'd let it down in there and fill it up and bring it up and pull the plunger and your water came out. And, when you wound your rope around the wooden stick there

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: on both ends.

Ken: That's very nice. Well, other than talking to, I talked to Mr. Boatright and talked, I'm gona talk with a Lee Cantrell. Is there anyone else that you might suggest that could give me

Henry: Preston of course

Ken: Pardon?

Henry: Preston

Ken: Yes, Preston

Henry 4:

Ken: Carlton.

Henry: Preston's beginning to be a little forgetful, so

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: um, you need to interview him, uh, my brother-in-law is ninety three. He's mind is still real good. It's A. C. Bible.

Ken: A. C. Bible. I sure have heard that name.

Henry: Well, that stadium at the Leander High School

Ken: Yes

Henry: Is named after him. 260-8474.

Ken: 260-8474. I will call him.

Henry: I don't believe A. C. ever cut any cedar. He was with the C.C. people.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: He can give you some history on that.

Ken: OK. Well, he can tell me about that program then.

Henry: Yeah

Ken: That would be good.

Henry: And, uh, hum, uh, (pause)

Ken: I've got a better pen here. There we go. Uh, OK. Good, that's really great.

Henry: He, he's in the telephone book

Ken: OK

Henry: I know his number off hand. But A. C. Bible is my brother-in-law.

Ken: Oh, right. You know, you said the telephone book. You know, they don't send 'em out anymore. And, uh

Henry: Well, they do here, they drop them by your mailbox.

Ken: Oh, they don't, I mean, they are, so, I used to have one that was a White Pages of all of Austin and Cedar Park, and everything. And now they just, I just get these little yellow things

Henry: Yellow Pages, I know. I kept my old one, that white one, it's all ruffled up I've used it so much.

Ken: Well that's – I know, and then you go on the computer and they say "free" and it's not.

Henry: Yeah

Ken: So, it's, getting a phone number these days could be hard. In fact, I might just go ahead and get this Mr. Hyatt's, because I'm pretty sure I don't have a Cedar Park directory.

(The tape was turned off, then turned back on)

Ken: Who didn't even – they didn't live like yall. They were'nt just poor. They were, uh,

Henry: Hillbillies.

Ken: Hillbillies. Is that what you called them?

Henry: (laugh) Yeah. That's what we called them. They lived in the hills and they did brew moonshine.

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: And, uh, uh, that'd be the only way I would describe them.

Ken: Where were the hills that you're talking about?

Henry: Over toward the lake and, uh, that's what, where we called 'em hillbillies

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: they lived off over there, and, you know, they shot deer illegally, and lived off the

Ken: Uh-huh

Henry: a lot off the land. But they didn't farm.

Ken: Um-hum. I wonder if they had gardens and such like that?

Henry: They might have had small ones, but not to the extent, I don't think, that we did.

Ken: Yes

Henry: Preston can, I think, fill you in on that, 'cause his daddy lived over there for a long, long time.

Ken: OK

Henry: And, uh,

Ken: Did any of them go to school with you?

Henry: No. No, we had the, Cantrells did, now. Uh, the one I told you about in Liberty Hill

Ken: Yes

Henry: Uh, they lived down, one time, right below New Hope Church. And they were so poor my daddy gave 'em a milk cow.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: We shared what we had. But, uh, you know, they didn't wear shoes.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: And their feet were rusted. They didn't bathe a lot, you know, stuff like that.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: They were fine people, they just had a bunch of children and had a hard time getting' by. In other words, a lot of people worked hard to put food on the table.

Ken: Um-hum. Do you think they were poor because they had a bunch of children?

Henry: That was, that was a whole lot of it, yes. And most families did have a lot of children. Very few had two or one.

Ken: Um-hum. But they didn't have any land, did they, to farm. In fact that land in the hills you couldn't really farm.

Henry: Unt-uh. They fished and they hunted and they sold furs. Back then you could sell coon hides, and fox hides, and, uh,

Ken: Yeah

Henry: Then, my grandfather was S. C. Inman. And, uh, he helped to buy the land for what is now the New Hope Cemetery. And, of course, the original land, where their church is, but, all of his children, he was married twice and the first bunch, they lived in Houston. We have a reunion with them once a year, but I don't really know any of 'em. But, uh, with the two families, I'm not sure, but I think he had like twelve or thirteen kids.

Ken: Um-hum

Henry: So, you know. I know the Cantwells had a lot and, uh, T. M. Pearson, now, married a lady. Her last name was Hyde. And she has lived in Cedar Park all of her life. But she's not in very good health. And she's my age.

Ken: Hum.

Henry: But when you, when you think about downtown Cedar Park, which is what we called it, you know there was a grocery store, and, uh, the section foreman's house, and, one or two little shacks, and, you're not talking about very many people.

Ken: Yes

Henry: That's really interesting. You know and I find it interesting (stop recording mid-sentence)