

## BBaker 1

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Ken: So anyway – I'm here talking to Barney Baker on Saturday, November the

Barney: 10<sup>th</sup>

Ken: And, we're talking about the cedar business. You were telling me that, just now, that this cedar was cut where?

Barney: The cedar was cut all over these mountains in here, uh, and this country out here, it's either, the land is either going up or going down. Uh, and they had, their main problem was getting that cedar down to the bottom or up on top. You know. Off the side of the mountain

Ken: Yeah

Barney: very steep with ledges on 'em

Ken: Yeah

Barney: Uh, probably the first cedar cut in here was in the 1800s, when people from Lake Victor to Burnet were building log cabins, log cribs, they needed logs for building and they would come down in here and truck the logs

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: And then haul 'em back out and use 'em. Uh, probably the cedar business didn't get real big until they started getting the means of getting it out. You know, the old trucks.

Ken: Yes

Barney: Uh, the, uh, I've got an old truck up here in the shop that I'll show you

Ken: Alright

Barney: That probably hauled an awful lot of cedar.

Ken: What model truck is that?

Barney: It's a '27 Chevrolet, a one ton

Ken: OK

Barney: And, uh, you've got, uh, five --- remember back into the '40s, and, uh, I can remember I went to school at an old country school two or three miles from here. The county road went by it and there was just constant traffic of those old cedar trucks passing with loads of cedar on it. They'd go to the top of the mountain, uh, which is, it's till on a county road, but not on a state road. They'd go to the top of the mountain and unload up there and they'd load the big trucks up there and haul it to West Texas.

Ken: You told me about that. Did, was there a different road to go to 281 or something like that?

Barney: Yes, a road, the county road cut through, uh, cut, kind-of a short-cut. It goes, it goes in, uh, kind-of takes this circle out, and there's a mountain on it, that the big trucks couldn't pull

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: loaded, so they went to the top of that mountain and unloaded and, and, uh, put their, their posts off in categories, you know, six foot, eight foot, all like that.

Ken: Right.

Barney: And, uh, they, uh, would load, there they would load it on the big trucks and then go to West Texas.

Ken: Right

Barney: A man named Ed Masey was the man, it was his yard and he'd finance most of the cedar choppers because they wouldn't have money to eat or whatever. He would, if they bought food, buy something, they'd buy it on his credit.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: And then he would take it out in posts.

Ken: Where would they go to buy it?

Barney: There were little shops in Burnet.

Ken: They'd go all the way to Burnet to get it?

Barney: Yeah, yeah. They, they all had to go to Burnet.

Ken: How many people do you figure were cutting out here. And what years are you talking about? The 19, early 1940s?

Barney: Yep. Early 1940s

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: On, and then, uh, for many, uh, they were cutting cedar back in the '30s and actually in the '20s.

Ken:Um-hum

Barney: But, uh, I don't remember much until the early '40s. Uh, late, no middle '40s.

Ken: Yes

Barney: But uh, like I said, it started with the posts, with the logs out around Lake Victor and Burnet they probably were building log cabins or whatever and they'd come in, down in here to get logs.

Ken: Right

Barney: And then it went into blocking for homes.

Ken: Yes

Barney: All the homes then were built on blocks, which they'd use the cedar blocks because that hard cedar will last forever.

Ken: Yes

Barney: And, uh, then it went into they started cutting posts, but when they had only wagons to take it out they didn't, it wasn't that big an operation.

Ken: They couldn't get it

Barney: No. It would be family operations and they'd take a load of posts in maybe get five dollars for a load of posts, but it would buy some groceries.

Ken: Were those folks, uh, back in, when they were still using wagons, uh, were they just like normal folks out here, --- farmers and ranchers, that were supplementing their income with a little bit of cedar? Or were they dedicated cedar choppers?

Barney: No, they weren't dedicated cedar choppers then.

Ken: Yeah

Barney: Then they weren't

Ken: Yeah

Barney: Uh, they, like my grandmother settled the place, uh, in 1884.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: They would have, they had big gardens. And they would raise a big garden and they would sell food. They'd take food into town and sell it.

Ken: Right

Barney: They'd butcher a beef or a hog and take it in. Pitch the meat in the back of the wagon and take it in and sell it. And, uh, then they'd cut a few posts now and then

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Uh, I started cutting when I was twelve or thirteen. And I would cut just now and then a little bit and finally get a pick-up load and I'd get about twenty dollars for it.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Uh

Ken: You were cutting with an axe back then?

Barney: Uh-huh. I cut, yeah, I cut with an axe. It was all axe work then. And, uh, the cedar cutters kind-of got started big-time when they started getting trucks big enough to haul a pretty big load

Ken: Yeah

Barney: And the other trucks that were big enough to haul a big load to West Texas

Ken: to somewhere else

Barney: Uh, then uh, they used, the trucks that I remember, most of 'em are old trucks, mostly Diamond T's. And, uh, they'd strip that truck completely off except for the hood and seat and windshield.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: They'd take the bed off and they'd put cedar posts crossways on them, framed

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: and then they stacked the posts on like that. They'd, uh, have a road, they'd find a way of getting to the top of the mountain of the big flat back in here and then they would, uh, cut the cedar on the sides and they'd go downhill in these old trucks. Load it on, get into the creek bottom, and go down the creek bottom, uh

Ken: And go right down the creek, right down Council Creek here?

Barney: I'd be North Morgan, South Morgan

Ken: OK

Barney: Uh, they'd go down those creeks until they hit, uh, until they could get to a county road

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And then they'd take it over to the, to the cedar yard.

Ken: That's the one at the top of the hill?

Barney: Uh-huh

Ken: Yeah

Barney: They, uh, had other ways of getting, like I told you before, they would cut a big cedar tree on top and chain it to the truck because the brakes weren't good enough. And then they'd, as they went down they'd stop and they would load onto the truck, get to the bottom, cut the post out of the tree they were dragging, and then load it on and drive on down.

Ken: That's a great story.

Barney: Yeah

Ken: That's a great image

Barney: These, uh, cedar choppers, most of them, or a lot of them lived in tents on the creeks. Uh, like, up North Morgan there were places up there where they would just set up a little tent city. Mostly family

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: and they'd have several tents there. They would just live in those tents and all they did was cut cedar. Uh

Ken: How many tents do you figure

Barney: They would just be, uh, four, five, or six in a group.

Ken: In a family group?

Barney: Yeah

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Now the last cedar cutters I remember in this area was probably in the late '40s. There was an old family log house up, uh, up this creek. And, uh, the family had moved on out and the cedar cutters lived in it.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: They'd cut cedar up in that area there and haul it out.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Uh, but they actually lived in a house. An old house.

Ken: Like maybe a sharecropper's house or something like that?

Barney: No, it was a landowner's. People came in early and they would have a hundred and sixty acres or just a little plot of land, or they might move in on someone else's land.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: They'd have an acre or two in a creek bottom that they could plow and grow something to eat. And most of 'em just grew, just grew food and stuff they could eat. My family did a lot of canning in the summer. They would, they would put up a world of beans, peas, all kind of food Uh, they, uh, the cedar kind-of started dying out in the late '50s probably when steel posts started becoming available. Because it was, you don't have to dig a hole with a steel post, and it stays longer than most cedar.

Ken: Do you remember when you started, when you switched over to steel posts?

Barney: In the '60s

Ken: 1960s?

Barney: Early sixties. Yeah, I, uh, I lived here. I worked the place here. I had four or five cows on the ranch of my own. I cut cedar, and uh, I fed out a few pigs that my Uncle gave me.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And, uh, in 1955 I graduated from high school and in the summer I went to work at Camp Longhorn in the kitchen. Uh, then I went to college. I went to Abilene Christian College for four years. I'd come home weekends and cut cedar and my dad would round it up for me and then I'd come back in a week or two, you know, about once a month, load it up and sell it.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And, uh, I graduated from college in 1959 with a degree in Chemistry and Math. I came back here, leased a pasture, bought a chainsaw, and went back to cutting cedar.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Uh, but I didn't cut cedar much anymore. I worked out. But still it was something you'd do that'd raise a little bit of money.

Ken: Yeah

Barney: And most of the other cedar cutters around this area, as a profession, have pretty well drowned out.

Ken: By then?

Barney: by then.

Ken: 1950's?

Barney: Late '50s, early '60s – it pretty well died out.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Uh, there was still cedar yards around Burnet. But those cedar yards would, they'd bought most of, see there was still some cedar cutters that cut professionally. And, uh, they would cut, I had some come in here, they would cut for the posts and what the government paid for clearing land. So they would get a double income off of that

Ken: I see

Barney: But it still wasn't much. And keeping an old truck up running in this kind of country was pretty expensive.

Ken: I imagine it was. So they'd get all the posts, so if you had land you wanted cleared the government would give you the money and you'd give it to the cedar cutter

Barney: Yeah

Ken: And then he'd get to keep the posts

Barney: They'd get to keep the posts that they cut

Ken: yeah. Sometimes these cedar yards would contract out to a rancher, uh, and, you know, pay the rancher 10% of the value of the

Barney: And there were some, when it was good cedar

Ken: Uh-huh.

Barney: And when they could get to it easily. It's according to how hard it was to get out and how much of the cedar produced posts.

Ken: Right

Barney: because a lot of the cedar would be crooked, it'd be in a bad spot and whatever. And so, uh, they would, you know, they would, the rancher, landowner, would not get anything for it.

Ken: Would that be the second growth cedar or just

Barney: No, most of it was first growth.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Well, it would be second growth. Now I understand that when the Indians were in here, that when they would leave here they'd set a fire and when they'd move North, or west, they'd set a fire and it would burn off anywhere from hundreds to thousands of acres.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Then the cedar would come back, and so there was not an awful lot, everything was not old growth cedar because a lot of it had burned.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: I've got that one section of old growth cedar that I'll show you later.

Ken: OK

Barney: But, uh, uh, a lot of the cedar that they liked to cut was, uh, cedar that they had no way of lifting or loading it until, uh, except for by hand, so they didn't cut the really big stuff.

Ken: Right

Barney: I'll show you some of those that they left when they cut cedar

Ken: OK, uh-huh

Barney: Uh, and uh, um, you know, if they were, if somebody needed really big posts they would have to take two or three or four people to load 'em

Ken: Yeah

Barney: They could still cut 'em but you'd imagine what it, with an axe, what it would take to cut down a cedar two feet in diameter.

Ken: that's something

Barney: Uh, there's a, the regrowth now that has come back after that cedar has been cut is springle cedar and it's not any good for posts

Ken: What did you call it just then?

Barney: springle

Ken: springle

Barney: springled at the base, at the ground

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: It comes out of anywhere from eight to ten to

Ken: Right, it's just a bush

Barney: Yeah. Yeah. Now if you leave it long enough it will produce posts.

Ken: Yeah

Barney: But, uh, they'll be crooked and it will take a long time for them to make anything.



Ken: I cut some cedar posts off my place. That were good sized. And I just looked at 'em yesterday and they're kind-of rotted. They are not that hard cedar. They were long, tall, straight posts, but

Barney: Well, your cedar, all the cedar that green has a sap on the outside.

Ken: Yes

Barney: And it can be anywhere from – if it's a young, fast growing cedar it will be mostly sap.

Ken: Yes

Barney: You won't have much heart.

Ken: Right

Barney: Uh, if it's a slow growing cedar, if it's in an area where it's dry, where it's just barely surviving it will grow mostly heart.

Ken: I see, so it's the conditions under which it's growing that makes the heart. Is that why the heart is growing down in the canyons?

Barney: Well, it's actually, that heart is actually the age of it.

Ken: Oh, OK

Barney: But, if it's growing real fast, it's growing, it is growing heart but it's also growing the sap

Ken: Right

Barney: outside faster, and so you can cut a pretty big tree down in a wet area

Ken: Yep

Barney: That, uh, it'll be a big tree. It'll have a good bit of heart, but it may have a couple of inches of

## **BBaker 2**

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Barney: sap on it. And, uh, you go up on a dry area where it's just pretty dry, and you can tell it's an older tree and it will have very little sap on it.

Ken: Um-hum. Hum. Well how many cutters back in the heyday of the, how many groups, clusters of tents, or cutters might you find in this area?

Barney: in this area there'd be just, there was one on our place up here. There was some cutters up this creek. Uh, there were, you'd go further up to where along the old Goodrich Ranch there were a number of, several sets up there.

Ken: Is that going toward Lampasas?

Barney: Yes. You go up just off the Colorado River to Bend, all in there it's heavy cedar

Ken: Yes

Barney: Uh, and I know some cedar cutters told me, said they could just go up there and park and cut posts twelve feet long all day long.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: And it was, it was down, it was just old cedar, probably had never been burned.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: But there was a lot of cedar up in there. This cedar in here, there was a good bit of big cedar that was old, but not the volume of cedar that was farther up.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And you get down on the creek bottoms, some of those creek bottoms up there, down where there's a good bit of moisture, and they would be just worlds from those cedar trees that were big.

Ken: They had a railroad that ran out of that bend area up to Lometa, just to haul cedar back in the 1920's

Barney: Yeah

Ken: 1910s. But it wasn't a successful thing because the bridge washed out too many times and they had to give it up.

Barney: Yeah. Yeah, They would, it was, transportation was a big part of it then.

Ken: Do you have any idea back in the old days when they were still, like you said, cutting with wagons and taking it in before they could long-haul it, truck it out, do you have any idea, ever hear of them take, use the train to take it to other places?

Barney: Well I don't know of any trained cedar being shipped out of Burnet or in this area.

Ken: OK

Barney: Uh, because, it could have been on the other side. You go down, uh, south and east of Burnet and you get into heavy cedar down there coming in off the Colorado River. Back in that area.

Ken: Marble Falls?

Barney: Um, from Marble Falls on into Cedar Park.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Down 1431

Ken: Yep

Barney: It was an awful lot of cedar in there. And they could have been shipping it by train from there

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: I know they cut a lot of cedar in that area.

Ken: Yep. So, you're saying, on Goodrich Ranch there'd be several different groups of cedar cutters

Barney: Yea, and see that's a long ways from, say, Beaver Creek to Bend. And there were numerous groups of people in there that, uh, that would be cutting cedar.

Ken: Where is Beaver Creek?

Barney: Beaver Creek is up, well you know, by Silver Creek.

Ken: I really don't know this area.

Barney: OK, it's about six miles farther up along this road.

Ken: This road being right here in front of your house?

Barney: No

Ken: The big one

Barney: the highway down here

Ken: OK

Barney: It's just five or six miles further up

Ken: OK

Barney: And they cut a lot of cedar up there and I know one time when we were up there visiting some people we knew and they were living in a tent, and, uh, the man came out of, down the creek in an old road and he had a big load of cedar on an old truck, an old Chevrolet truck that still had the wooden spokes on it.

Ken: Um

Barney: Uh, and it was, you know, it was, you couldn't go very far and very fast in those old trucks loaded with cedar. And he probably didn't get twenty-five dollars for that load of cedar. I know, uh, I can remember selling posts, and this was in the early '50s, for thirty cents apiece for a pretty big post.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: A cedar stave would be a nickel. So, uh, you didn't make much money. They were just. The families that lived here and owned land, and had gardens, and had cattle, they would do the cedar cutting and just haul a load out if they were going to town anyhow, haul a load out and pick up four or five dollars.

Ken: Back in, when you were cutting in the '50s, you could make pretty good money, couldn't you, as opposed to what else?

Barney: Well, compared to what, I mean, what, uh, you know, for inflation

Ken: Yep

Barney: it was, I'd get, for a big pick-up load, I'd get, uh, twenty-eight, thirty dollars.

Ken: Which is pretty good day's

Barney: Which was, yeah, but it would take me, uh, if I had, if I was cutting full time I could, I could cut that in a couple of days.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Uh, but it would be cutting, you know, full time off and on weekends

Ken: But that was a lot of money back then. If you could make fifteen, this same age and you made fourteen dollars a day, cutting a load every two days. That was a fulltime job. That's more than you could make

Barney: That would be more than you could make somewhere else.

Ken: Working at

Barney: Then you spent a good bit of time of loading and getting it and hauling it and

Ken: Uh-huh. And, so truck maintenance too was probably gona eat up some of that money

Barney: Yeah

Ken: Well, tell me, did, what about this reputation of being independent? Did they seem any different to you than the other folks that had farms and ranches around here? I mean, everybody had a, like you said, it was a tough life. You know, you had to grow your own food and everything.

Barney: Everybody, everybody was very independent.

Ken: Yeah

Barney: Uh, you did, uh, there were a few people – I had an uncle back towards, uh, Lake, Buchannan Dam that worked for a rancher. The rancher, the ranchers and landowners were very independent. Uh, they, they were kind-of the law on their place.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And, uh, I mean, to an extent.

Ken: Sure

Barney: Uh, but cedar cutters were independent but also they depended on the landowner, I mean, they had to answer to the landowner, uh, for whatever they could, you know, could do. Landowner liked having them clear the land, but still they had to answer to the landowner

Ken: Yeah

Barney: And, uh, but they came and went as they wanted to. They went to school if they wanted to or didn't.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Uh, a lot of the kids would be working cutting cedar, the boys, by the time they were twelve or thirteen they'd be helping bring it out and load it and even cutting. And, uh, it was, it was, uh, kind of a situation of where school would take the kids away from home. They needed the kids at home to work.

Ken: Yes

Barney: Uh, my dad was raised on the place here and he uh went through the fourth grade

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: And then came back to work, you know, work on the place

Ken: Right

Barney: Very few of that family, my dad's family, very few of them ever got, uh, I don't know any of them that ever got a high school degree

Ken: Right, right. In your generation

Barney: My generation came along and since the others, my mother and dad, my mother had a high school degree. Uh, but, uh, had finished high school and that. But, uh, they were then determined that their kid was gonna get an education

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: To get out of this type of, of work. And, uh, so, in my family – there's six of us, uh, four of us have college degrees of some sort.

Ken: That's great. Right. A kid your age that was a cedar cutter, that came from a cedar cutter family, they wouldn't, they wouldn't even be going to high school, would they?

Barney: A lot of them wouldn't.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: A lot of them wouldn't. And there was nothing to compell them to go to school. Uh, if the parents wanted them home to work they stayed home and worked.

Ken: I talked to a man in Marble Falls, Charlie Maughan, I don't if you – it's right down in the center of old Marble Falls and there were a lot of cedar cutters. And he said he started cutting at nine.

Barney: Yeah

Ken: Yeah, and, uh, dropped out of school then. You know, whenever, I'm not sure what grade he was in. And I talked to another man -- I was down in Liberty Hill and that, a lot of 'em came – and he, he said he was, he said he was out hoeing cotton, he's, he's about mid-seventies. He was hoeing cotton at five. His daddy had cut off the hoe. And at six he said he could make as much as a man, you know, in just that work.

Barney: Yeah

Ken: And he was cutting cedar later

Barney: Then, once a kid got big enough to do anything with their, to understand what you told 'em to do, they worked. Uh, they carried water. We didn't have electricity here until 1945 or '46

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And we had to carry water from the spring which was about two hundred yards from the house. Uh, everything had to be done by hand, you know.

Ken: Would you pump it up into a barrel and carry it

Barney: No, it was a spring. It was a spring

Ken: OK

Barney: And you'd just take a couple of buckets and go get two buckets of water

Ken: Two at a time, huh?

Barney: Uh-hum

Ken: Walking it.

Barney: Yeah

Ken: back to the house. that's something. So, other than lack of education, they were just the same as everybody else, or would you say

Barney: They were, they were, they were, uh, intelligent people. Uh, they were intelligent, in fact, the ones that I know were raised cutting cedar young and that lived to be older and older went into business and had businesses

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: a lot of 'em do. Uh, I know one is our cabinet maker. Uh, there's one, a cousin of mine, that uh, he lived with his grandparents. And, uh, he started cutting cedar at twelve.

Ken: Uh-hum

Barney: Uh, and, uh, the other cedar cutters would haul his cedar out for him and bring him the money. And he finished high school, went into the Air Force, stayed ten or twelve years, got mechanic's training, uh, went to work for a Chevrolet company, and then bought his own salvage yard and expanded and is extremely successful now.

Ken: What is his name? That sounds like a familiar story. It's not Cantrell, is it?

Barney: Uh, no. No, it's R. G. Stanford.

Ken: R. G. Stanford.

Barney: Uh-ha. And, uh, he, you know, he worked his way up, he had, he knew what he wanted to do, went to school – he wasn't made to go to school

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: Uh, or encouraged to go to school. But he could have stayed home and cut cedar. But, uh

Ken: There's a lot of, uh, people will tell me how independent they are, how they like, they would go to a job – Simon Ratliff, does that ring a bell?

Barney: Ratliff? That's in Llano. Llano.

Ken: Ratliff, yes. This is a Simon Ratliff and he lives out, now, out by the maintenance barn on 29. He was a cedar cutter all his life.

Barney's Wife: There were a few Ratliffs here in Burnet but more in Llano

Barney: There wasn't a Ratliff in Burnet other than those that came from Llano.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: But, uh, they, there are still people that do some cedar cutting. And, uh, there is a cedar yard in Lampasas and a cedar yard in Johnson City, that, uh, the man that had a cedar yard in Johnson City, uh, cut cedar in this area here when he was young. He's about seventy years old, I think sixty-eight, seventy years old.

Ken: Does he still have the yard in Johnson City?

Barney: Uh-huh

Ken: I cannot picture that yard.

Barney: When you go into Johnson City from this area you cross the bridge on the Pedernales River

Ken: Yeah

Barney: You go past the little group of buildings on the left and then he's got a yard on the left. Right in that area

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Now, that's the last time I was down there

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: He only buys by ..., you have to call him and tell him that you have a certain, uh, he'll tell you what he's buying. At the moment

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Right now he's buying, uh, posts that are six, six and a half, seven, eight, and ten foot posts.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And, uh, he'll tell you what he's buying and then you meet him there at a certain time with your posts.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: So it's not a cedar yard as you would think or just someone having it open and attended all the time

Ken: Yes

Barney: And most of the cedar now is sold for decorative purposes. Uh, you see more and more, um, really, uh, a lot of your, of your commercial build, commercial buildings or restaurants and things like that are going back to where they decorate with old sheet iron

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And they have cedar posts in there, around different things

Ken: Right, they're really pretty stripped off and \_\_\_\_ like that



Barney: Yeah, and you go to um, Docs, in Marble Falls, and that, a lot of that area there has the cedar posts in it

Ken: Uh-hum

Barney: But you put a cedar post under a roof, out of the weather, and there is almost no limit to how long they'll last

Ken: I know. I've got some pictures in here, you know, of Charles Goodnight, of the Goodnight Trail

Barney: Yeah

Ken: He started the J.A. Ranch, uh, up near Canyon, and took the cedar out of Palo Duro Canyon, which Palo Duro, in Spanish is hard post.

Barney: It's hard

Ken: hard post. Palo Duro Canyon was named after cedar. The first house in the Panhandle was built out of cedar logs. There is an old picture of it in here, in 1884, I think it was.

Barney: Goodnight, uh, Charles Goodnight

Ken: yes

Barney: Uh, he moved in right in behind the Indians

Ken: Yes

Barney: In Palo Duro Canyon

Ken: Yes

Barney: Uh, um, the, uh, what was the name of that famous Indian chief?

Ken: Quanah Parker

Barney: Quanah Parker. That was his, that's where that group of Comanches lived.

Ken: Yes

Barney: That was their main headquarters in there and then when he finally did, uh, move onto a reservation and went back, uh, he got very upset that Goodnight was ranching in there and Goodnight, although he owned all that, or ruled it, he had to tell him that he was from, he had to

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### **BBaker 3**

Barney: he had to tell him that he was from Colorado

Ken: I read the same book you read

Barney: Yeah. Summer Moon.

Ken: Yes, he told him he was from Colorado because they hated Texans.

Barney: Yeah (all laugh)

Ken: I want to pause this. I'll show you that picture here.

Barney: Kevin, I want to take him over and show him your log cabin.

Other man: That's fine. If you take any pictures, I'll go over there

Ken: Yes

Other man: But don't take any pictures that'll identify the location

Ken: OK

Other man: You know, as far as reference point.

Ken: You bet

Other man: So, don't take any pictures that will show my house

Ken: I understand what you're saying. In other words just show the cabin

Other man: Yeah. That way I don't want anybody knowing

Ken: I understand. I live in the country as well.

Barney's wife: people \_\_\_ loved that log cabin

Barney: \_\_\_ and it came from up the creek up here. They built it up there. And, uh, they, when my uncle moved it down here and rebuilt it down here, and uh,

Barney's wife: They numbered it when they took it apart.

Barney: Sometime, ten years ago or something like that, it was fifteen years ago, probably, when Richey was there, my aunt still lived in the old rock house and that cabin was right behind it. Well there was some women who were ancestors or descendents of the Peacocks that had, their mother or grandparents had lived in that house. So they came in and they were, wanted to look at the house and all and said "but we're gona come get it" and told my aunt "we're gona come get the house – it's our ancestors' house and we're gona get it and move it over to a certain place." You know, and so my aunt called me and she says "don't you let them have that house. Don't you---" and I never did hear back from them. But I, someone probably told them that it was not their house. It was

Ken: OK. And, yeah, you start hearing these names, now, do you know Dick Turner?

Barney: Yep

Ken: Yeah

Barney: I sold cedar to him.

Ken: Yeah, yeah. I talked with him. And, uh, and he told me that there was a guy named Peacock that had a, that brought his cedar into his yard in a wagon and this man named Peacock and he had, he gave me his first name, lives now over by Bertram, uh, Oatmeal.

Barney: I don't remember the man's name that was up here. Now, I don't know if he cut or not. Uh, because he also had a home in Lampasas. I understand he had a house in Lampasas and had one down here.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: He had uh, apparently, had, was one of the first people to have that strip of land because back then you would go in and you could just say I need, I want to get a hundred and sixty acres in a certain place

Ken: Yes

Barney: and they'd just give it to you for maybe five dollars a feet or something. And then people would move on it and they found out they couldn't make a living on it then they would sell it to anybody that wanted it. Sometimes if the tax was more than five dollars they couldn't pay the tax on it.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And so they would, that's the way some of these big ranches were collected.

Ken: I see, by, by getting these smaller pieces of land and putting them together. I didn't know that.

Barney: Yeah.

Ken: Well, a lot of the cedar choppers in West Austin lost their land because of taxes. And, I mean, they started out with pretty good pieces of land and taxes and one thing and another and they'd

Barney: The biggest danger is to ranches, not to land now, in this area. Well any area. You take farm land. This farm land just, and just farm land all in the Midwest is selling for seven , eight thousand an acre.

Ken: Yeah

Barney: Well, how can you go in and buy a thousand acres for seven or eight million dollars and pay for it and make a living on it?

Ken: You can't

Barney: And the government, though, when you die you can't give it to your kids because the government is gona take their part of it.

Ken: Um. Yeah

Barney: You know, the inheritance tax – it will kill ya.

Ken: yeah. Um. Where, where do you think the, a, I mean the farmers and ranchers, the old Texans, you know, they came in after the revolution. Do you think the, did the cedar cutters come in at the same time, or did they come in later?

Barney: The cedar cutters didn't come in at the same time. They just developed. Uh, the original people, in fact, my great-great-great-grandfather came in with Stephen F. Austin.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: And his, his son, who was my great-great-grandfather, was Norman Woods. And they came in 1824, and, uh, he, he and his two boys were both killed by the Mexicans. And, uh, but they were just farmers/ranchers, only. And there was nobody to sell posts to.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: In this country they didn't even have fences until the '20s.

Ken: Yes

Barney: You'd run so many cows and they'd locate pretty well in an area. And they'd run cows and they'd locate in an area

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And, uh, the fences in here we built in the 1920s.

Ken: OK

Barney: And, uh, so, there was no need of posts for our fencing. It was only for, well, corrals,

Ken: yes

Barney: And, and houses, and log cabins, and things like that

Ken: Yes

Barney: so there wasn't a need for that until uh the 1900s, 1920s, '30s

Ken: yes

Barney: \_\_\_ that there, I wouldn't, uh, a lot of the ranchers, and I don't know when they developed, but, um, there's a, a, in Llano, a man named Stribling owned everything nearly from Llano to Johnson City. And, uh, then he, when he died, there's a lot of the land owners in there are Stribling descendents.

Ken: I see.

Barney: And, uh, so when they started getting bigger and having bigger herds and everything, uh, that's when they started kind-of pulling their cattle back in, you know, and fencing, but, they couldn't do it, they didn't do it before the cattle drives because in the cattle drives the fences would be cut.

Ken: Right

Barney: you know. So, I don't know when that really started. I'd say turn of the century

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: probably 1900.

Ken: Yeah. Charles Goodnight was talking about, he defended, he defended fencing and his reason for defending it was because you could, you could selectively breed your cattle.

Barney: Yeah, Uh-huh

Ken: That was a big deal.

Barney: Yeah, you know, at that time, so much of the stuff was Longhorn.

Ken: Uh-huh, yeah

Barney: and, uh, then uh, they started to bring in the English breeds, the Hereford

Ken: right

Barney: I guess the Hereford was probably the first one that was brought in. Crossing with the, with the Longhorns and, I can remember my dad's cattle, as far back as I can remember, had a little bit of Longhorn blood in them. And they'd fight anything. You didn't, you didn't, uh,

Ken: crazy

Barney: I don't care how gentle the cow was, if she had a baby calf you stayed away from her. They'd kill you, I mean, they were bad.

Ken: Yeah

Barney: Uh, there were a lot of wild cattle in here

Ken: Yep

Barney: Uh, now that kind-of ended when they were treated for the tick fever

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: and I'm not sure when that was. That was in the early 1900s. 1920s or '30s, but there was tick fever killing, killing, uh, it would kill the cattle. The Texas cattle would become immune to some of them,

to some immunity, but the Texas cattle couldn't be shipped anywhere because they'd take the ticks with them.

Ken: Right. They wouldn't let 'em up into, uh, I guess it was Arkansas or something. It was sort of the East, that's why some of those western drives started.

Barney: yeah, and lot of areas would not let you enter there with Texas cattle

Ken: Yes. Do you know when they built the, uh, the lakes, the Highland Lakes. That must have been a huge source of employment.

Barney: It was. And that was during the Depression, at the end of the Depression, in the '30s.

Ken: Yes

Barney: And, uh, they had, uh, many people working on the dam but they also had people clearing the lake.

Ken: Yes

Barney: They had to cut that, drag it to a brush pile, and burn it. And so they had lots of people clearing the lake.

Ken: Do you think that brought people into the area that could have become cedar choppers later on?

Barney: It had to bring, it had to bring a lot of people in. I'm sure that they did develop from that, from that.

Ken: Uh-huh

Barney: Uh, I hadn't really thought about it that way, but I'm sure that they did develop from that.

Ken: Yeah, I'm trying to sort of get a picture of when they came in. I know in the Austin, but if you go further south, to the Guadalupe River, they were burning charcoal on the Guadalupe River. And

Barney: They did that here.

Ken: Did they?

Barney: Uh-huh. The very early, not the, people just making a living in any way they could.

Ken: Yes

Barney: They would stack posts in a tee-pee type deal and start a fire under it, and then cover it completely with dirt except for a little deal at the top and then when it burned it certain length of time they'd cover that up and smother it out. And then after they gave it time for the coals and all to die they'd dig it out and sell the charcoal

Ken: And that was being done around here as well?

Barney: Yeah

Ken: Did you see it?

Barney: No. I never did see it. My dad told me about it.

Ken: Oh, yes. So what would they do with the charcoal? Take it into Burnet?

Barney: They'd sell it in Burnet.

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: And then use some

Ken: Um-hum

Barney: But it was mostly, um, mostly for sale

Ken: Um-hum, yes. Well, good. Uh

Barney: Do you want to drive around a little bit?

Ken: Yes, I do. Le me turn this off.