

*The  
Kerr County Historical Commission  
presents*

*An ORAL HISTORY*

*Of*

*WILMA TEAGUE*

*Kerrville, Texas 2018*

*Kerr County Historical Commission*

*ORAL HISTORY PROJECT*

Interviewee: WILMA TEAGUE

Interviewers: Francelle Robison Collins  
Bonnie Pipes Flory

Date: December 19, 2017

Place: Kerr County Courthouse  
Kerrville, Texas

*The Oral History Project is a project of  
The Kerr County Historical Commission,  
a volunteer organization. Oral History  
Committee chair is Francelle Robison Collins.*

Transcribed and Edited by Rita Edington Odom

# *Kerr County Historical Commission*

## *ORAL HISTORY PROJECT*

Name: WILMA TEAGUE

Date of Birth: August 31, 1941

Place of Birth: Kerrville, Texas

Education: Tivy High School; University of Texas

Father: William Lanza Council  
Born in Eudora, Mississippi, 1875  
Died in Kerrville, Texas, 1950

Mother: Hattie Marie Pickens  
Born in Sevier County, Arkansas, 1897  
Died in Sevier County, Arkansas, 1986

Spouse: Charles Warren Teague, deceased

Children: Lanza Marie Teague  
Joshua Charles Gentry Teague  
Jason Andrew Teague  
Aaron Will Teague

Siblings: Anna Belle Council Roland, 1907-1997  
W.L. Council, 1922-1993

### SUMMARY

Wilma Dell Council Teague was born August 31, 1941, in Kerrville, Texas at Secor Hospital. She attended Tivy High School beginning in first grade and graduated in 1959. She attended the University of Texas and received a degree in Ancient History of the Near East and Pure Mathematics. She was a teacher for most of her life. She married Charles Teague and they lived in several places including Columbus, Georgia, Oklahoma City, OK; St. Louis and Kansas City, Missouri; Cedar Rapids, Iowa and Illinois before she returned to Kerrville, TX. Wilma's father, W.L. Council owned a lumberyard and furniture store in Kerrville. Wilma has one daughter, three sons and six grandchildren. She has volunteered for many years at the Old Tunnel State Park, and Kerr County Historical Commission, First Methodist Church, and Hill Country Youth Ranch.

**An Oral History of**  
**WILMA TEAGUE**

*My name is Francelle Robison Collins and I am with the Kerr County Historical Commission, Oral History Project. Today is December 19, 2017, and I am here at the Kerr County History Center in Kerrville, Texas, with Bonnie Pipes Floury. We are talking with Wilma Teague, who understands that we are making audio and video recordings of this interview and that a typewritten transcript of this interview will be provided so that changes can be made. The audio and video tapes, however, cannot be edited. This information along with copies of any family pictures and documents provided by you will then be turned over to the Kerr Regional History Center, Schreiner University, and the University of North Texas' Portals to Texas History, where they will be available to the public unless specific restrictions are placed on them by you. These restrictions will be noted in the Release form after you have had a chance to review your manuscript. Are you clear on what we are doing today?*

FRANCELLE: What is your given name?

WILMA: Wilma Dell Council Teague

FRANCELLE: When were you born?

WILMA: August 31, 1941

FRANCELLE: Where you born at home or in a hospital?

WILMA: At the hospital. Dr. Knapp delivered me.

FRANCELLE: Was that Secor Hospital?

WILMA: Of course. That was the only hospital. All the others were for tuberculosis patients.

FRANCELLE: Do you have any siblings?

WILMA: Yes. I have a half-sister and half-brother. My father was married the first time to Leah Stegall and they had a child in 1907. That was my half-sister Anna Belle Council and she married C A Roland and she died in 1997. After her mother's death when she was 6 years old, my father didn't marry for several years but when he did he married a nurse, Lara Mickel, who contracted tuberculosis and died when my brother, W.L. was seven. W.L. was in the Navy in World War II. Then my dad married my mother. They had known each other for many years because my dad owned property (timberland) and my mother's family owned property next to his.

My mother was a teacher. She never finished high school because they needed her for a teacher so they pulled her out of school to teach and she finished her high school and college degrees in summer schools. They must have gotten married in a hurry because my mother didn't even clean out her classroom desk and she was NOT an impulsive woman. They married on their way to Texas because my dad said "I'm not taking you across the state line until we are married. She helped him in the lumber yard and furniture stores that he owned. One of his furniture stores was across from what is KACC (Kerrville Arts and Cultural Center) now. His lumber yard was where HEB is now.

FRANCELLE: What did you say was there next to Wolfmuellers?

WILMA: The furniture store my mother managed.

FRANCELLE: Was it Council?

WILMA: Yes. W.L. Council Furniture Store. He had several business interests. Mother got the one downtown. I grew up during my formative years playing in the alley behind there. I played with Melody Watson, the Hubers, and the Blacks who had the cafe. One of my early traumas was when they locked me in a refrigerator and my mother found me

FRANCELLE: What was your father's name?

WILMA: W.L. Council. William Lanza Council. That's where my daughter got her name.

FRANCELLE: Where was he born?

WILMA: He was born in Eudora, Mississippi in 1875. They didn't live there very long. His father sent him and his older brother, Ed, to Texas because it was the "land of promise". And things were bad in the south after the Civil War. The family had originally come from North Carolina and had been burned out when the war ended they had pretty much nothing. They went to northern Mississippi and moved on after my father had finished the 4<sup>th</sup> grade. Two brothers came to Texas on the train to find where the family would settle and they chose the Morris Ranch because there was husbandry and agronomy there and the boys knew all of the members of the family could find work, As soon as they got enough money together my grandfather bought the property on both sides of the river at Waltonia and operated Sherman's Mill from 1895 until 1917. My grandfather wanted his children educated so he bought a house on Gilmer Street in Kerrville and the younger children finished high school at Tivy. I have another relative that taught school and that was my dad's younger sister, Lilly, and she taught all over Texas, in the valley, at Hunt and at Ingram.

FRANCELLE: Was she Council?

WILMA: Yes. Always council. She never married and she also was superintendent in Ingram and that's where my teaching career began.

FRANCELLE: When he opened the lumber yard, was that a need here?

WILMA: When he first came over to Kerr County he worked in the cemetery where he is now buried. There had been a flood and he said "my plots aren't going to be near the river" so our plots are in the high spot. He started doing carpentry and was the finish carpenter on the Schreiner Mansion. He built the staircases there and at Pampells and he could figure intricate angles and was known for porches because he would fit the curved corners and angles so they fit perfectly. He opened the lumberyard and made his fortune before the market crashed in 1929 and sold his lumberyard to Temple. It was over on Water Street.

FRANCELLE: He had the only lumber yard in town?

WILMA: I don't know – that was way before my time. After the stock market crash, he started another lumberyard on Main and Hayes. When HEB started building, they discovered I still had the title to a wedge of that property. I knew it but had never done anything with it. HEB lawyer came and asked me to sign it over. I had two children at UT and it sounded like a scholarship to me. My dad died in 1950 and that's when mother sold the lumber and furniture business.

FRANCELLE: What was your mother's name?

WILMA: Pickens, Hattie Marie. She was a very proper woman. And I'm sure I was a big shock to both my mother and father because they were past expecting children when I showed up.

FRANCELLE: Did you know your grandparents?

WILMA: No. Both of my grandfathers participated in the Civil War. Grandfather Council had a shoulder wound which years later contributed to his death. He was working on a fence in Hunt and was injured and developed sepsis and died in 1908. My grandmother Council lived in Kerrville after that but she died before I was born. My grandfather Pickens was a water boy for the Confederate soldiers. My Grandmother Pickens died my freshman year in college.

FRANCELLE: Where did you start school?

WILMA: My education process began at the Presbyterian kindergarten. My parents were concerned about social development because with both parents working at the lumber yard, my only playmate was my aunt who was born before the Civil War. I attended the Presbyterian kindergarten for 2 years. Then I started at Tivy. Until the Lutherans and Catholics came over from their private schools, I was the youngest one in my class.

FRANCELLE: So you started Tivy in the 3<sup>rd</sup> grade?

WILMA: In first grade. In first grade and sixth grade I had twin sisters for teachers, they were like bookends. Mrs. Hahn in first and Mrs. Davis in sixth. I graduated from Tivy in 1959. Then I went to the University of Texas. I was well prepared by Tivy, even though I went from a tiny high school to the big bad university.

FRANCELLE: What were you involved in at Tivy?

WILMA: Band mostly, and FTA.

FRANCELLE: What did you play in the band?

WILMA: I played bass clarinet and contra bass clarinet; we had a very good marching band and concert band.

FRANCELLE: Was the band director Mr. Armstrong?

WILMA: Mr. Armstrong and then Mr. Price. I played in the State band. Band was fun and I ' was glad to be in it but I couldn't convince my children to be in the band.

I have a double degree from UT, I got my degree plan on mimeograph paper my Freshman year. You could get a degree in History and Pure Mathematics concurrently if you took the right courses but you could only take the courses listed on the degree plan; I was an undetermined major so I could take any courses I wanted. I was caught my Senior year and needed to declare a major. After graduation I started graduate school that next year in counselling and guidance but it was interrupted because of Mr. Wonderful, who was an Aggie. After we married we moved to Columbus, GA and that was my first teaching assignment. That was the time of the buildup to Vietnam and suddenly the high school went from being a small town high school to being the biggest high school in Georgia. Overnight. I had a friend who was teaching Latin in the faculty men's bathroom and another teacher friend who was teaching on the stairwell. The students would sit on the stairs and she would sit at the bottom of the stairs. I was teaching mathematics and since you needed to be able to concentrate, I had a classroom. I had up to 53 students in a class. We ran out of duplicating paper before Thanksgiving. I was also teaching 6 classes in 7 different classrooms. Because of split lunch; I taught ½ of the class for 30 minutes in one room, then lunch, then the next 30 minutes in another classroom. I was a new teacher so I just thought that's what teaching was about. We had the distraction of railroad tracks right behind the school with railroad car after car carrying tanks and helicopters. There were planes flying overhead ferrying equipment to Vietnam.

FRANCELLE: Did your husband go to Vietnam?

WILMA: No. He was infantry but non-combat qualified. His major was journalism so he was made editor of the Infantry Magazine. It was a cushy spot and we felt guilty

because everyone else was being shipped out. We were in a housing apartment and everybody was going to Vietnam. The wives were going home to Momma and I have wondered about what happened to them. I have been to the Vietnam memorial to look for names and so I know what happened to some of our neighbors

FRANCELLE: Were all of your children born there in Columbus?

WILMA: Our first daughter born there but she didn't live. My husband had thought he would make the army his career but decided not to. He took a job with the Daily Oklahoman in Oklahoma City. Bless my husband's heart, he went to job interview and of course got the job immediately. He also went to the school district and told them about me. When he got off the plane that night he said "I got the job and you got one too". So I taught math in the Oklahoma City schools. Then he took a job with Ralston Purina and we started our family. Our first and second children were born in St. Louis, Missouri. Charlie took a job with Missouri Pacific Railroad and we moved to Kansas City. Jason, our middle child, was born in Kansas City. Later we moved to Cedar Rapids, Iowa where my husband worked for an advertising agency, specializing in agricultural things. My youngest son was born there. My husband started own business and we moved to Rock Island County, Illinois.

FRANCELLE: You taught in all of the different places?

WILMA: No, my teaching career ended with the Oklahoma City job and I was traditional housewife. I was dutiful and did all the things I should do. Then when we were in Rock Island County, my husband chose an alternative life style and I went back to work. My mother had had a stroke at the time and had come to live with us. I taught across the river in the Iowa schools. I went back to school in order to teach in Illinois. They wanted me to be elementary certified even though I wanted to teach junior high. I could have been a professional student but had to earn a living so I taught in Davenport, Iowa and it was a wonderful experience. I was the finalist in the competition for National Teacher of the Year. I was a much better teacher being older and after having children. I was more understanding of the little horrors at the back of the room because one of them might be mine. After I divorced and thought about raising 4 children, I knew there was a better place to live. I loved the people there and loved the job; but didn't like the weather. I have shoveled enough snow and chipped enough ice to last the rest of my life; I decided to come back to Texas and was looking at Austin because of my university days. But when I viewed Austin as a parent I decided against it. I came to visit my half-sister who lived in Kerrville.

FRANCELLE: Was your mother still alive?

WILMA: Mother was still alive but in a nursing home in Sevier County, Arkansas. Mother had a sister in that nursing home and 2 nieces close by and I didn't know where I would end up. I interviewed at Tivy and Ingram (didn't even know Ingram existed) and my half-sister said "I heard they have a real good school in Ingram".



I liked both schools and decided I would take the first offer but I wanted my children to go to Ingram school;

FRANCELLE: Is that because it was smaller?

WILMA: Yes and I liked the philosophy; Carol Moffett was principal; she had selected a diversified faculty with excellent credentials. Also, I had a cousin who was teaching there so I had “inside” information. Ingram called on Wednesday and Tivy called on Friday, that’s how close I came to teaching at Tivy. I bought a home in Greenwood Forest and planned carefully so it would be paid for by the time I retired. I’m glad I made the move back to Kerr County. My half-sister became a widow and I learned a lot from her and got to know her better. I was always scared of her when I was a kid. She didn’t have children and had taught at Tivy.

FRANCELLE: How many years difference in your ages?

WILMA: She was born in 1907 and I was born in 1941. She was the age of some of my classmates’ parents. It put me back in contact with people I had known as a child.

FRANCELLE: So you sold your house in Greenwood Forest?

WILMA: When my half-sister died she left me her home. Daddy had built it for her and they had made improvements and an addition. I decided to sell my house in Greenwood Forest and live in the house my daddy built. I retired early to fit in the loophole where I could get teacher retirement and social security. I had gotten social security by teaching workshops and other contracts outside of teaching contracts.

FRANCELLE: Do you have children close by?

WILMA: My daughter, Lanza, has lived all over the state of Texas and does interesting things. She lives next door. My oldest son, Josh, lives in Hayes County. He is a realtor and has a hobby of buying old cars and putting them back together. He gave me a Mercedes SLK and I said I didn’t want to take care of another car. He said I would have fun in it and I have. It’s my bat mobile because I do a lot of volunteer work particularly at Old Tunnel State Park; I’ve become a parade junky!

FRANCELLE: Why don’t you tell us about the Old Tunnel State Park.

WILMA: When I was at the University of Texas I was a spelunker but had no interest in bats. The year I retired in Ingram I had done some work with the science teacher. We had a project and got first in the state. When I finished the Master Naturalist program I had to do volunteer work and one choice was bats. I am not afraid of caves and not afraid of bats. I have volunteered since the year 2000 and I’ve even gone with Parks and Wildlife people and studied bats in the Chiricahua Mountains in southeast Arizona where there are overlapping eco-systems. They study hummingbirds and bats there and it is wonderful. So my car is the bat mobile, we have magnetic bats on side of car. I also volunteer with the Historical

Commission, at church, and I've been on the school board for Hill Country Youth Ranch.

FRANCELLE: What church?

WILMA: First Methodist in Kerrville. My mother was Methodist and my father was Baptist. It was a mixed marriage just like mine was a mixed marriage with an Aggie and a T-sip. I have a son who is an ordained Methodist minister

FRANCELLE: Yes, I think we left him out.

WILMA: My middle son, I haven't gotten to him yet. His name is Jason Andrew. He went to the University of Texas and was an exchange student to Germany. When he returned he was too late to get into UT. He had a younger brother going to Angelo State and since they only had one car, he decided to go there. He ended up really valuing his time there with smaller classes and personal contact with professors. He got a good education there. He had wanted to go in to politics. When each of my children graduated from high school I took them on a trip that had to do with what they wanted to do. He wanted politics so we went to Washington, DC. He had been thinking about the ministry and he saw the light and went off to seminary. He is doing good and doing some television ministry.

His older brother, Josh, wanted to be a businessman. He a realtor now. Lanza (the oldest) wanted to go in to journalism. We went on a whale watching trip and she took some photographs that ended up on the cover of a magazine. My youngest, Aaron, couldn't decide what he wanted to do so he didn't get a trip. He lives in south Austin and works from home. He sells security software for big businesses and travels all over the U.S.; they are going international.

I have 6 grandchildren. My daughter has no children. My oldest son has an 11 year old (Scarlett) and a 2 year old (Benjamin). Jason has 3 children. Scheaffer (11<sup>th</sup> grade) and Claire (6<sup>th</sup> grade) are both excellent students; Seth has autism and has taught us a lot about life. He is in 9<sup>th</sup> grade. Our youngest son has one child, William, who is 9 years old.

FRANCELLE: I know you are proud of all your family. Aren't they coming for Christmas?

WILMA: They were all here for Thanksgiving, including my ex-husband's sister who was 6 when we married. My mother in law had a terminal disease so my husband and I were going to be the ones parenting Debbie. My mother in law lived and was one of my best friends. Debbie has very little family and is always included in our family. She is single and has an interesting life. She is a songwriter and adds a lot of spice to our family. They will all be back for Christmas.

FRANCELLE: Did we leave anything out about your family that we should know.

WILMA: I don't know. When I get home I'll let you know.

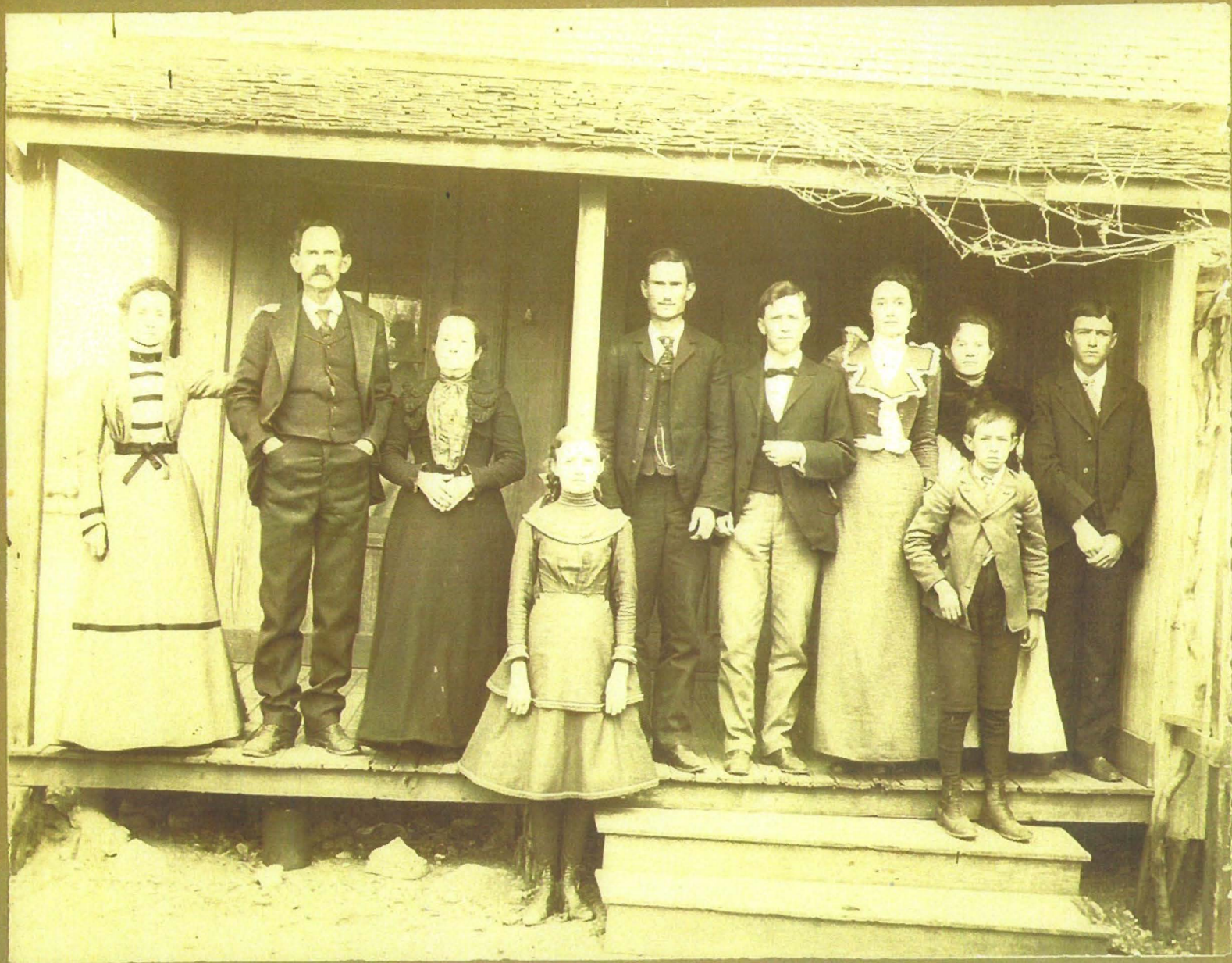
FRANCELLE: That was very interesting. Thank you for your time.

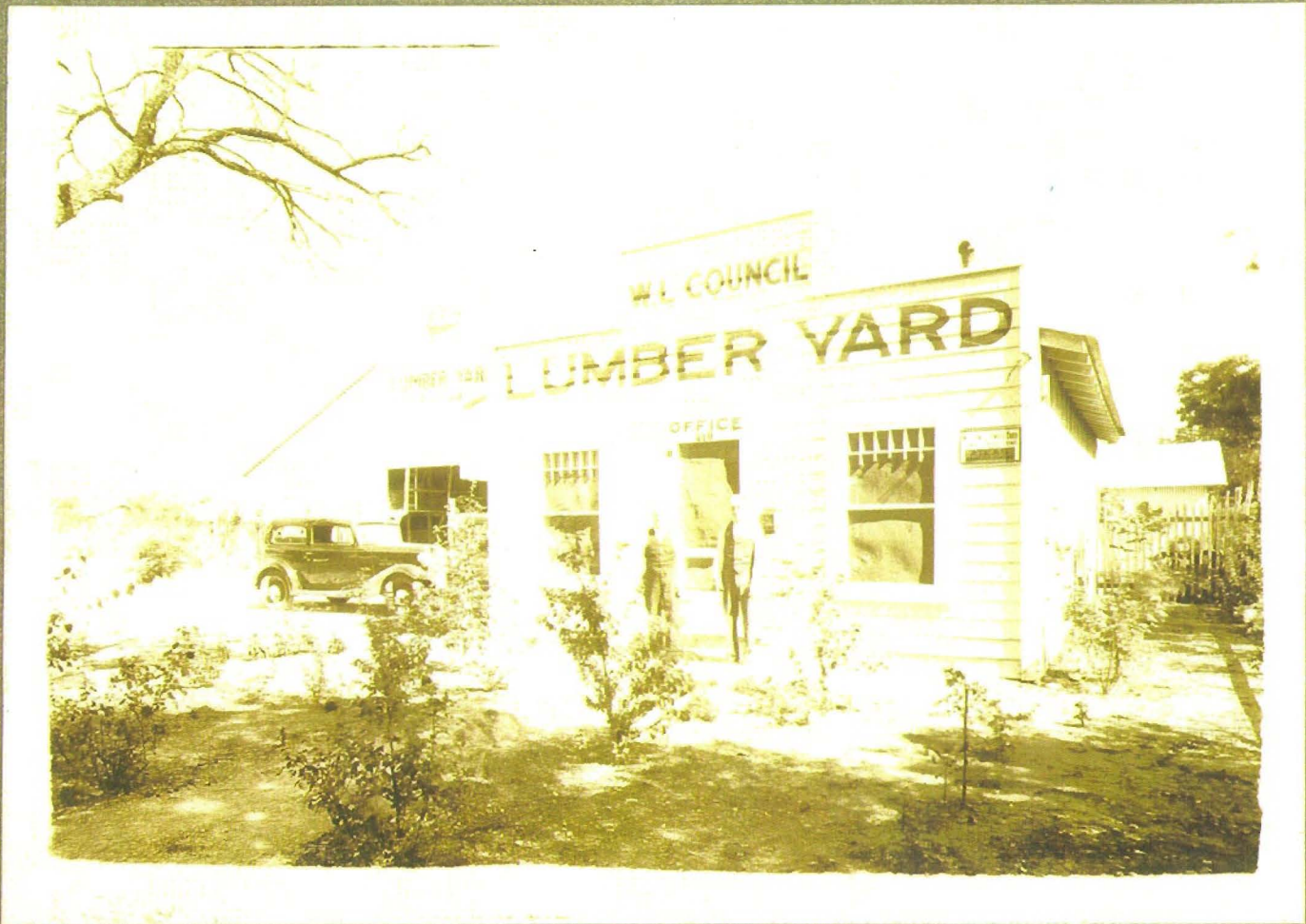
WILMA: I enjoyed it.

END



The Council Family, about 1895  
L to R: Lucy Council Sing, William D'estrage Council, Roxanna Clark Council,  
Lenora Council, Ed Council, William Lanza Council, Lillian Council, Roxie Council Sing,  
Joseph Council, & Evandor Council.

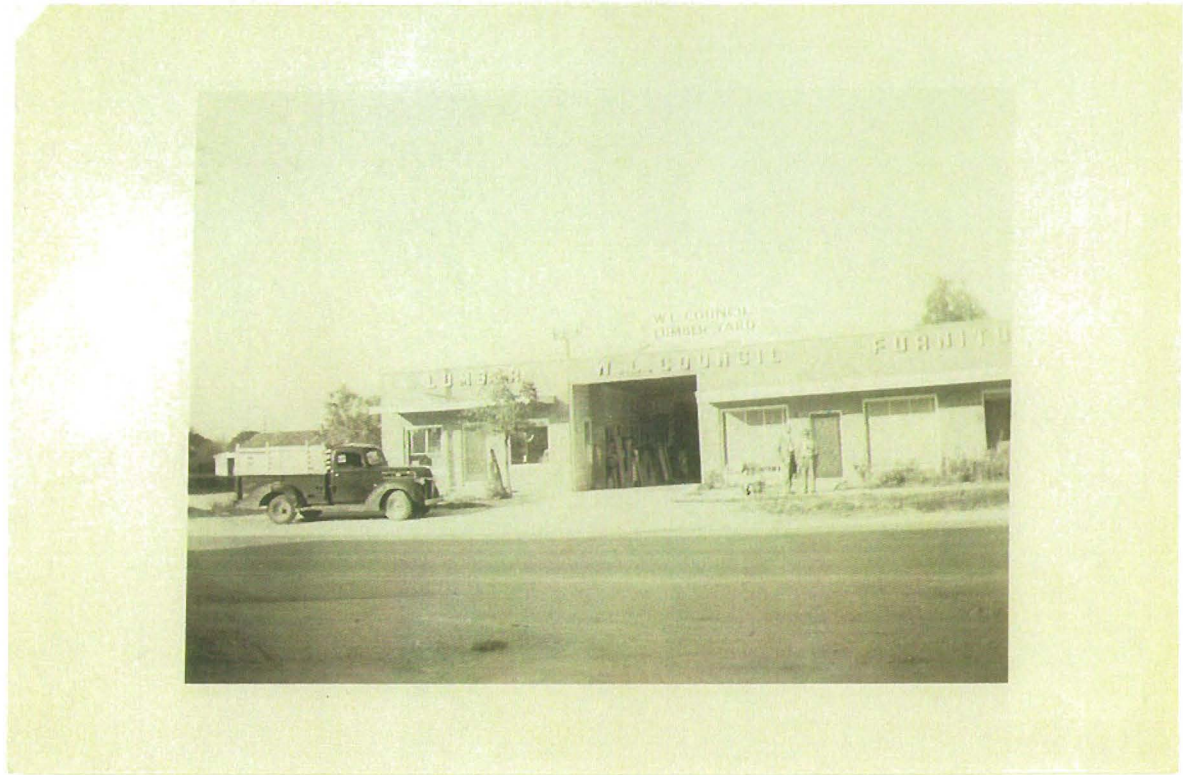




W.L. Council Lumber Yard, about 1920



L to R: William Lanza Council  
Wilma Dell Council Teague  
Hattie Marie Pickens Council



W.L. Gunnell Lumber Yard about 1945





William D'estrage Council  
Roxanna Clark Council

(Wilma Council Teague's Grandparents)

Wilma Teague & her children

Standing, L to R: Joshua Teague, Aaron Teague, & Jason Teague  
Seated, L to R: Wilma Council Teague & Lanza Teague

