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Interview with

BILLY BARKER

September 3, 1987

Place of Interview: Denton County, Texas

Interviewer: Steve Renner
Kate Singleton

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Date: September 3, 1987

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Oral History Collection

Billy Barker

Interviewer: Steve Renner; Kate Singleton **Date: September 3, 1987**

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Mr. Renner: We want to hear it all.

Mr. Barker: I don't know much. It's all on myself.

Mr. Renner: I would like to ask you a little bit more about the sawmill. You say that your dad would take it and move it around from place to place where there was work, like, maybe over to Valley View.

Mr. Barker: It always takes a sawmill dust pit for the sawmill dust to come out. It takes a pretty big one. Daddy always dynamited that out, and he would absolutely make the hole exactly like you dug it out. He could really shoot dynamite. He even dug out his postholes; he knew how to do that. He sat an orchard out at one time, and he

dynamited all the holes for it. He really knew how. But you would have to; they called it a sawmill dust pit, I guess. He pulled the sawmill with a steam engine; he had three steam engines.

He owned two threshing machines. He owned a big one and a smaller one. One you fed from both sides. The big thresher engine was as big as the biggest locomotive on the track, one of these old steam kind, you know, a long time ago. You remember them engines? He had one just like that, only it ran on the road, and then he had two smaller ones, just like it, only smaller. He left that over in the Bolivar area.

My daddy was born in Bolivar. He came here and bought this place. All of this place along the creek bottom belonged to us at one time. He was thirty, I think, when he came over and bought this land.

Singleton: When did he buy this land? Do you know when?

Barker: I think when he was thirty years old. He was born in 1884. My mama is eighty-eight years old, and she is ten years younger than my daddy. He owned it when he married Mama, and he married her in 1911. He owned it before that. He bought it...he was one of these guys...he went to college, and not many farm boys done that. His daddy was a sheep raiser in Bolivar. He owned I don't know how many sections of land over at Bolivar. That is where Daddy was born and raised.

Well, when he got out of college, he came...I don't know how come he came [over here]. He liked blackland, and he liked bottom land. So, anyway, him and Mama married in 1911, the 11th day of November, 1911. He already owned this place when they got married, but he hadn't built a house. They lived [up here] at the corner in Aubrey Vaughn's house. There used to be a house [up here] on the corner until he built that house [down there]. I was born in that house [down

there].

Singleton: **The little old house down the road?**

Barker: **Yes. That sawmill...what he would do, he kept it at home most of the time down there in the bottom. But he moved it up to Valley View, and it stayed up there two years on Mr. Smith's or Mr. Jones's place. I ought to know. I wrote enough bills out. I forgot. I wasn't but eight years old. The house is still there. He put it on the creek down there, Elm Creek. Of course, he had to have water for that steam engine, and he piped it out of the creek. He couldn't move the sawmill unless they had water some way, a tank or a creek or something.**

Renner: **Sure. So, when he had it set up here, it was down in the creek bottom, too.**

Barker: **A steam engine takes a lot of water.**

Renner: **Did he ever worry about getting flooded out?**

Barker: **Oh, we did get flooded out. Are you kidding? The logs were over the fence, down in this bottom. That fence had**

fourteen feet of water over it. The big logs [this big] just floated down over the fence, and all of our shocks of wheat one time went with the water. We just sat out on the porch and watched our wheat go right on off. Boy, it can get on a high horse, but, you know, that water never gets here or never gets to any of these houses. But it will get up on the house on the corner. Now, isn't that funny? It will get to [that] house on the corner, but it doesn't get to any three of these houses here. I have seen it a million times. But it backs up Mud Branch. It is lower there than it is here, because it gets underwater up there. But none of this gets underwater. The closest water has ever been is down below that last house [down there]. That is when it got up to fourteen feet down there in that land. Of course, it got much deeper than that on further toward the creek. The creek was fourteen feet deep [right there].

Singleton: Do you remember what years it flooded? About what time period was this flooding that you're talking about?

Barker: I think it was 1934 or 1935. I think it was when that big flood came. I am sure it was because my son was born in 1937, and I didn't have any kids by a long shot, so I guess it was then.

Singleton: It must have been a mess.

Barker: It sure was.

Singleton: Did a lot of other people get flooded out then?

Barker: Oh, it washed away cows...and everybody...

Singleton: Everybody along this...

Barker: A way on up, around Valley View and all up in there, this water goes plumb up there. I'll tell you one thing. When they build this lake, this lake water is going places they don't think it is going. I have been here all my life, and I have seen it wash this Clear Creek going to Denton, Highway 10 coming out of Denton and going to Aubrey. They have given that highway so many numbers that I can't keep up with it.

I don’t go that way. I go by the Missile Base. But that is what used to be Highway 10. From the top of [that] hill to the top of the other hill, it washed all that out, bridges and all, one year. That was in 1938 or 1939. It had to have been 1939 or 1940 because my kid was two years old. It washed all that road thing out, and I went over just before it washed out. My daddy was in the hospital and was going to have surgery, and I had to get there. [This way] wasn’t no better. Like, they have this new Interstate 35, and you can get it. Boy, it was worse than this other way, and that road was just trembling when I went over it. It was water solid on it. I guess it went out right after that. I wouldn’t do it now, but I had to get to the hospital. There wasn’t no other way to go.

Renner: **I want to get back to the sawmill for one more question or so. How long did your dad operate that sawmill? How many years? Like, ten years or twenty years?**

Barker: More than that. Let's see. I grew up with it, and he still operated that sawmill until...let's see. He died in 1944. Let's say he operated it until 1942, for all his life, because he sawed a bunch of lumber for some people just before he died. That was his last operation. They would come here and want those oak sills and things, and they would bring some oak trees [over here], and he would saw them up for them.

Renner: He did that during the wintertime, or would it be the year round?

Barker: He would do it anytime anybody wanted some lumber. My daddy couldn't say "no" to anybody; his heart was too darn big.

We worked all this land on both sides [here], all this land to the creek, my daddy and I. He would run the tractor. We had a big ol' gasoline engine. I don't know the name of it, but it was as big as them steam engines. It was gasoline. I would run it all day, and Daddy would run it all night, and we drove that thing. We

put all of that in grain every year.

Singleton: **Every year in grain?**

Barker: **We had this upper land in cotton. No, it was wheat and oats.**

Singleton: **Then you had the upper land in cotton?**

Barker: **Yes, cotton and corn and things. Of course, we owned all this. We had this land on both sides plumb to the creek. We had 300-plus acres of wheat every year besides our other crops.**

Singleton: **What did you have in cotton?**

Barker: **I don’t remember how many acres because we didn’t fool with the cotton. We hired most of that done, but Daddy and I grained. And in the wintertime, we would overhaul...we had an Oldsmobile truck. Believe me, it was something else! He had two extra motors, and in the wintertime he would fix those motors up. Then, during threshing, we would haul our grain to Dallas at night, and he would drive down there loaded. He would sleep, and I would drive back. We would haul all night long because he had to thresh during the day.**

We would haul grain at night. I have been driving...I have been going by myself ever since I was eight years old; I mean, I have been driving a car. I don't mean little cars. I have driven everything.

I was my "daddy's boy." I had a brother two-and-a-half years younger, but he was a midget. He was always little. He never did do nothing in the field. He didn't know nothing about the field--never did. He died at twenty-eight. He was overseas and was [over there] nearly four years, and he came home and died with a heart attack.

Singleton: **Where did you sell grain in Dallas? Did you sell it at Farmers Market?**

Barker: **No, at the wheat mills down there.**

Singleton: **They had wheat mills down there?**

Barker: **Yes, they had wheat mills down there.**

Singleton: **All down along the backside of downtown?**

Barker: **No, as you went in...where Industrial Boulevard is now, back in there, that used to be wheat in there.**

I went to Dallas when I was twenty-

four years old and went to work at Sears. I finally made a buyer, and then in 1944, when my daddy got bad, I had to come back home.

Singleton: I would like to ask you some more questions about the cotton because we were interested in when the cotton died out. When did people stop planting cotton, or did they ever stop planting it completely?

Barker: Well, we had cotton right [out here] this year.

Singleton: You have it this year?

Barker: Right out there. That is Mr. Johnson's; he runs the feed store in Sanger. But the cotton, I guess...when the old farmers all died, these younger generations are too cotton-pickin' lazy to fool with it. They want cows and coastal...

Singleton: You say the old folks. That would be like people your dad's age?

Barker: Well, everybody. That is just like Mr. Sam Vaughn. He lived there. This used to be Vaughn Town. John Vaughn lived [over

there]. The house is burned down now. Walt Vaughn lived [up here]. There was George Vaughn, and Walt was his boy. Aubrey Vaughn lived [up here] on the corner. Well, all of them were cotton raisers. Their whole place was in cotton every year. That's all they growed, was cotton. They strictly raised cotton altogether. See, they are all dead. They are all gone, and when they died and left, why, then...

Singleton: Did they die in the 1940s and the 1950s?

Barker: Some of them lived longer than that, but Mr. Vaughn, after he got too old to work, he sold his place. But Mr. John Vaughn didn't. He died in 1969. They farmed it in cotton until he died, and I think that was in 1969.

Singleton: When they sold it off, do you know if they divided the land up and sold it?

Barker: They sold it and then divided the money.

Singleton: They sold the one piece...

Barker: They sold it to Gerald Stockard's boy. He is the one that owns it--John Vaughn's

land. Ed Davis owns this place in front of us. He used to be deputy sheriff. He lives in Denton. A real estate agent owns this place below me. My mother and sister sold it. I kept mine, and they sold theirs. My sister lives in Lewisville.

Singleton: **Most of the people that sold their land, they went ahead and sold their land as blocs? Like, the Vaughns sold one big bloc, and the man that bought it still farms it?**

Barker: **Yes, Billy Schertz has it leased from Gerald Stockard's boy. Mr. Davis works his...well, he doesn't do anything but fertilize his coastal and mows it and everything. He raises cows on it. He sells his calves when they get so big, and he makes pretty good off of it. He makes real good off of it.**

I had cows until just before my husband died. I had an old mama cow, and somebody shot her, and she died, and then I got rid of all of them. I'll just tell

you, she was part of the family. I used to have a bunch of cows, and I am glad I got rid of them. I am fixin' to buy some more, though. I had my money saved that I sold my cows for, and it was a good thing I did because I had to go take it and pay for the funeral. You don't get it very cheap now. But, anyway, I am glad I haven't bought any more cows. I was fixin' to.

Renner: All beef cattle?

Barker: No, mine wasn't. I milked, churned butter. My old cow that they shot, I guess it was hunters. I milked her, and I churned. When I needed butter, I just saved it until I would get some cream. You know what? You didn't have to save but twice, and you could get two pounds of butter. I'll tell you what. The calf would suck until he would go away, and you could get a ten-quart water bucketful of milk. She was a black Angus, and they don't give milk.

Renner: Would there be a truck to come around to

pick up the milk?

Barker: **No, I didn’t sell milk. I would give it to everybody in the country and my mother. My Uncle Joe and Glenda Allen [over there]...I had milk customers come just as regular as anything to get milk. I didn’t sell it; I gave it to them. I worked myself to death raising a garden, so I can give it to people. I gave people squash and okra this year. I have put up some, but I haven’t put up much.**

I haven’t done nothing since my husband died. I have just let the place grow up. Well, I went out there and got on the big mower to mow, and my damned back wheel broke off, so I just parked it. The lake is supposed to come in, so why should I go buy another mower? Why should I have somebody out here? I don’t have the money to do that. I don’t need another mower because I couldn’t get back what it cost, and they don’t give them away. If I had a man out here to weld that one, it would cost me a $100, so I

just let it set. The belt broke on my riding lawn mower, and my push mower won't start, so I have been just sitting here. I really don't care. You know what? I never let my fence rows grow up. I kept all under them clean, kept it just like a picture. Everybody came around and said, "That is the prettiest place I ever saw." Yes, we kept it clean, and I just let it...I don't give a hoot. What is the use of me getting out there and working? Then I got to go, you know.

Well, I'll tell you, in 1932 they were going to build this lake. They even cleared the timber [over there] for the dam.

Renner: **In 1932?**

Barker: **Yes, in 1932, and that blew up. My daddy grieved himself. Oh, he grieved because he had just got this place in pretty good shape, and then he just grieved and grieved. I'll tell you what. It killed my husband. Every time you would see him, he would be out at the barn bawling. He**

said, “I know every rat hole on that place.” I’ll tell you what. What they have done...we was going to build a new house in 1969. We started saving, and then in 1970 we had the carpenter come out here. He already had the framework out, and this cotton-pickin’ man came along in 1971, in the November of 1971, and he said they were going to start buying this land in May. He put this map all out and showed us and everything else, and so I went out there and kicked all the mess down. I just hated to leave it worse, anyway.

I’ll tell you what. I just didn’t have any room, so I went down to Fort Worth and bought this dadgummed trailer house for storage. Well, I liked to live in it better than I did the house because I can see out better. So, I took the house for storage and lived in here. It knocked me out of my dream house. It has knocked me out of everything, and then it killed him. Absolutely, he bawled from

the time they started that. Everytime you would catch it him, he would be out crying somewhere because he hated to leave so bad. I was born here.

Singleton: **You say they were going to do this dam in 1932. What happened?**

Barker: **In 1932? Don’t ask me. I was too young to care. I was a teenager then. I didn’t give a damn. I was just waiting for night to come. I would work all day in the field, and at night--my God--I would come in and wash my hair. I had to because I always had blond hair, and it showed dirt. I would come in and wash my hair, take a bath, and go out to a party. Then I’d come home, go to bed, and get up and go to work and work all day and come home. I didn’t care what happened. It didn’t make no difference.**

Singleton: **When your dad was working this land, did he have people to come in and work for him? Did he hire any help or anything like that, or was it just basically the two of you?**

Barker: Only at harvest time, around then. We had I don't know how many. Of course, that big thresher had to have thirty-two hands for it to run it, and then for the other one, I think it was twenty-plus. Sure, we had to have...

Singleton: Who did you hire?

Barker: Oh, there was plenty of people then. Every old-timer here can tell you they worked for C. B. Simpson. He ran for county commissioner in...I forgot what year.

Singleton: So, they hired basically the neighbors? All the farmers around?

Barker: We had two boys from Kansas that came every year for harvest, and they slept up...we had a big red barn down there. A tornado tore it up. We had a big loft up there, and they had beds all over that loft. Those two boys would come from Kansas. "Shorty" and "Lefty" is what we nicknamed them. They looked like "Mutt" and "Jeff." They would come and stay with us until the harvest was over. Of course,

Daddy threshed everywhere--all over Bolivar, around Slidell, Krum and everywhere. Didn't everybody have a threshing machine back in those days.

Singleton: **What time period is this? In the 1930s and 1940s?**

Barker: **I was eight. No, I was about twelve. He had the big one longer than that, but I started working at it when I was about eleven years old. I started driving the truck. I started by working running the bundle wagon during the day when I was about eleven years old.**

Singleton: **What year was that?**

Barker: **I was born in 1917, so that was in 1928.**

Singleton: **And you would go out and work in the fields. To guide thirty-two people, that's a lot to run that machine.**

Barker: **You had to feed it from both ways. Of course, he ran two. Daddy just overseen the whole dadgummed works. I had a cousin, Claude Simpson, and he would not let nobody fire that big one but him. He gave...I don't know what year. I've got**

the check. I don't know where the check is. He gave $9,000 for that engine the year he bought it a way back, so that was a lot of money back them days.

We had an Oldsmobile truck and a Hutmobile car. That Hutmobile car had the steering wheel on the right side, and that's the kind I learned to drive. It had two kerosene lamps on it in case the battery went dead.

Singleton: **At least you could see on the way home.**

Barker: **And the whole body and motor was solid aluminum. My brother sold it for junk. I don't how much he got for it, but after my daddy died, it was in running shape. He sold that car for the aluminum in it. Furthermore, my mother let my sister and her husband sell that Oldsmobile truck, junked it. I could have got a fortune for those. I used to drive an Olds all the time until I got married to Barker, and he was a Ford guy, so I went to Fords the last time I went and bought a car. I bought a Buick, and he wouldn't speak to**

me for two months, but that was all right. My uncle had had this Buick car. My daddy would not have a Ford parked in his yard if he could keep from it. He hated Fords, and why I don't know. Daddy believed in big cars and things. He didn't want any part of Chevrolet or Fords.

So, anyway, my uncle had this old Buick. He had ten kids, and with him and his wife that was twelve of them. When they loaded up, you had rumble seats that let down, and he would fill it up with them. All he did...that man only knew how to turn the key on. He didn't even know how to change the oil in a car, and he just went, went--no trouble.

So, when I got ready to buy, they wanted me to buy a Lincoln, is what my husband and my son wanted. I have a son who lives in Fort Worth, and he wanted me to buy a Lincoln. We went down there to the Lincoln house in Dallas, and he offered us a real good deal. I told him, "I may come back tomorrow and look at it."

So, we got up here to Denton, and I told my husband to stop because I just wanted to look at the Buicks. I went in there and bought a Buick.

Singleton: **And he didn't speak to you for two months afterward?**

Barker: **That's right.**

Singleton: **Well, let's go back a little bit and talk about when you were growing up some more and little bit more about this area. Where did you go to school when you were growing up here?**

Barker: **I went to Prairie Chapel until I graduated. I got as far as they taught, and that was the eighth grade, I think, and then I went to Pilot Point High School.**

Singleton: **How did you get to Pilot Point?**

Barker: **The bus came to the creek, and you had to walk, beg, or ride or any way you could to get down there. Usually, if it was pretty weather, we walked. Of course, I wasn't the only kid going. These kids...see, there was a house [right [over there].**

There was a house [down there]; there was a house [right there]; there was a house [here]; there was another house [here]; and there was one across the road. See, this was just thick with houses and thick with kids. It looked like a stampede when we all started to school. Everybody is gone but me. Carl Sadau and I are the only old-timers left in this country.

Singleton: **What happened to everybody?**

Barker: **They got to be "big shots." They had to leave, and they moved off to town. Everybody had to move to town. That was a big deal, and now all the town people are moving to the country.**

Singleton: **What time period was this? When did these people start to move out?**

Barker: **Well, I said that when the older ones died, the younger ones wouldn't stay.**

Singleton: **The idea we are getting is that some people moved out in the 1940s, like, right after World War II. Some of the people sold off their houses.**

Barker: **Didn't nobody sell anything until the old**

ones got too old and died. Everybody around here kept their stuff until the old ones got so old they couldn't go any longer, got helpless, and most of them died. And what didn't...Uncle Aubrey [up here] got so old he couldn't even get around. All the kids were gone, and both of them were so old. See, he owned all that land [over there]. He owned 365 acres, and...well, he couldn't handle it. Well, he sold out to a dairyman, and him and her moved to Denton. None of the kids wanted it.

Sam Vaughn had a whole bunch of kids, but none of them wanted it. But he has one son that comes to see me all the time, at least once a month, and he said he would give anything in the world if he had kept that place. He said, "The only time I am happy is when I come out here looking at it." He said, "If I had just kept it!" He said, "You were the only one that had any sense. All the rest of us were just too big, mighty, and high up."

Of course, I would never be happy in town. Believe me, I couldn't stand it. It is a lot of hard work out in the country, but it is worth every bit of it to watch things grow. We were fixin' to go to town, and he just dropped dead out there on the patio, right in front of me, the 13th of June. I haven't cared about anything since. Used to, I wouldn't even go...I didn't go nowhere. I didn't even go with him. I stayed home and worked. Well, I would trim the trees, mow the yard, mend the fence, work on the cars. I did all of our mechanic work. I have done every bit of it.

Singleton: **Where was your husband from?**

Barker: **Bonham. See, I met him in Dallas when I was working. He owned the service station there in Dallas that I traded at, and we got to talking. After about four years of talking, we finally discovered that neither one of us was married and that we kind of liked each other. And he loved the farm, and I loved the farm. That was**

the only way I could get back to the farm, if I married him. I couldn't come back by myself. If I married him, I got to come back to the farm.

Singleton: **So, you got married and came back to the farm?**

Barker: **We were married thirty-two years. We were thirty-two when we got married. We were married the 7th day of June, and he died the 13th day of June, right after we were married thirty-two years. He loved the farm just as well as I did, but he was a paint contractor in Denton.**

Singleton: **So, he worked in town, and then you worked on the farm?**

Barker: **Yes. I quit working in 1951. I was a bookkeeper for McCrory's. I was assistant manager until 1953. I went to work there in 1951. After we moved back up here, I sat around and griped about being lonesome. Well, I didn't have any tractors; I didn't have any barns; I didn't have anything. And there wasn't anything to do because the place was**

leased out. All I had was this little ol' bitty yard, and I sat around and griped about being lonesome. He was still working in Dallas then until he sold the station.

So, he said, "Why don't you go to work?" I went down there and put my application in. The ungodly thing is that nobody in the world could have got it, and within a week they called me to come to work.

Singleton: **Where is this you were working?**

Barker: **McCrory's in Denton. When I quit there, I didn't work anywhere. I never griped anymore.**

Singleton: **How long had your land been leased out after your dad died? Did you lease it?**

Barker: **It was leased out after my brother died in 1948, and until 1948, I don't remember when it was last leased. It has been a long time. Well, they sold their part and divided it up, and I have never leased mine. I used to grow Sudan for my cows over to the north, and here I just**

pastured. I don't remember what year they sold. My brother died in 1948. He worked it the first year he came home from the service in 1947. He farmed it. Then, after that, Mother leased it out to Mr. Osborne first, and then Mr. Wagner, and then they decided they wanted to sell theirs and put it on a home at Lewisville. They bought them a home in Lewisville. So, I kept mine.

Singleton: **Did many people lease around here? Do many people lease their land out? Was it pretty common then?**

Barker: **Oh, yes, it was. Aubrey Vaughn leased his for a while to Osborne before he sold it. Then Mr. Clark leased it for dairy cows, and then he finally moved to Denton. I don't remember...I don't know whether Mr. Osborne bought it or not or if he just leased it. But Foxworth-Galbraith lumberyard owns it now. He owns this one, and Dr. Haggard owns that house [up there] in the field. That is Gerald Stockard's boy [over there], and [this] is Foxworth's**

[here]. Ed Davis used to be the deputy sheriff in Denton, so I have all "big-shots" around me--doctors, lumbermen, and lawmen.

Singleton: **Do you remember much of the Depression years?**

Barker: **Would I remember! We had four big granaries in that barn, and then Daddy built a granary. He took some of the feed stalls and boxed it up, and we had it bursting with wheat, and we couldn't even sell it. We were starving to death. We parched corn and took corn and made hominy out of it and everything else. People would get enough money to have it ground, and Daddy kept everybody in this country in flour. He would take a truckload. Everybody would go in and donate money, if they could get any money, and they would have it ground into flour. He would go around in the truck and put out fifty pounds of flour at everybody's house. When everybody would get out of flour, we would load up a truckload of grain and**

take it. Daddy kept everybody in flour. Of course, they helped donate the money to get it ground, but he kept everybody in bread in this country during the Depression. A widow woman down here, my God, he kept her in everything. My daddy was the biggest-hearted person you ever saw. He was too good for his own self, and he helped everybody during the Depression.

Singleton: **Did they take it into Dallas to get it ground?**

Barker: **No, over at Sanger. We used to have a good mill [over there]. We had a big grain mill and everything. It used to be real good. There was a good gin right in town.**

Singleton: **When did all of this close down?**

Barker: **Oh, I really don't know.**

Singleton: **Do you remember any other things about the Depression? Carl Sadau told us a story about the beef cows, that the government came in and shot a bunch because there were too many.**

Barker: They did that and buried them. They used to buy the cotton from the farmers and get them to plow it up--the cotton allotment. People would plow their cotton up and wouldn't raise it so they would get the government money. The Depression was terrible.

Singleton: Do you think it here was a lot harder...

Barker: It hit everywhere, I guess. I don't know, but I know here how hard it was. There just wasn't any money. I'll tell you what. You could take five dollars, if you had five dollars, and you could have bought enough groceries to do you a year. But nobody had five dollars. I know I found a dime one time, and Daddy took it and bought a great, big piece of bacon with a dime, enough to do us for a week with a cotton-pickin' dime. That's how penny-tight he was. You got six cents a dozen for your eggs.

Singleton: It was bad.

Barker: It was worse than that. And since these people voted for [Ronald] Reagan, who was

a Republican, we are going back just like it was. They voted for him, and we have done been through that. The only people that voted for him didn't go through it, and that's the only reason. I bet you the people that went through it didn't vote for him. I sure didn't vote for him. [Jimmy] Carter wasn't any good, but at least he wasn't a Republican. Republicans is for the rich people--the richer, the better. They said the other day that Reagan--told it on TV the other night--that Reagan had a little time to work in his office and tell about his movie acting. That's what they said. I'll tell you one thing. That people that went through that Republican Depression...the Republicans are for the rich people. They are not for the poor people. I'll tell you what. The poor people and the rich people have got it made. It's the middle class, like me and you, that haven't got it. See, the government will help the poor people and the rich people, and us in

between, we have to “root hog or die.”

Singleton: **That true, that’s true.**

Barker: **That’s the Republicans.**

Singleton: **During the Depression did many of the people in this area lose land?**

Barker: **I didn’t know of anybody that lost land. They already had it.**

Singleton: **Did they lose equipment?**

Barker: **No, not of anybody that I know of, because the old equipment was all wore out, anyway.**

Singleton: **It was already paid for?**

Singleton: **Yes, it was already paid for. But I never will forget when Daddy bought me a new cultivator to plow cotton with. He bought it on credit [over here] from Oscar Gentle, and he paid it out by the year. He had to pay it more often. Well, anyway, he got it paid for, but that was...I think it cost about a $110 or something like that. That would be like $2,000 now. Of course, my daddy had a lot of money at one time, but, anyway, he had a lot of sickness. My sister died at five**

years old. My brother, the oldest child, took pneumonia and died; and my next sister to him, she got burned up alive at the age of five. I got two brothers and two sisters buried, and there is only one sister left, and my mother. My mother, she will be eighty-eight in February. She's as healthy as a cotton-pickin' horse. She doesn't take medicine; she doesn't go to the doctor. I bet you a dollar she could walk from here to Denton.

Singleton: **Probably so.**

Barker: **She is as healthy as a horse, and lazy. She don't cook. She never did cook, though. She ain't no different. She never had to. Her daddy spoiled her. When she was at home, Daddy said they went together for about a year, and he said he never saw her wear the same thing twice. Boy! They dressed her! She was a beauty queen! After they got married, my daddy done the same thing. She didn't even know how to boil water without burning it. That's pretty bad. Daddy spoiled her, and**

she never had to do anything. She never went to the store and bought a bill of groceries in her life. She wouldn't even know what she was supposed to do. She wouldn't learn how to drive the car where she could help Daddy, and she has wished a million times that she had learned how to drive.

Singleton: Where was her family from?

Barker: Green Valley.

Singleton: Do you remember when they got married?

Barker: On the 11th day of November, 1911.

Singleton: How did she get away with not cooking or doing anything? Was her dad pretty well off? Was he a farmer?

Barker: Her daddy had a lot of money, too, and she had a lot of brothers and sisters, too. She has one brother living now, and he lives in Denton.

Singleton: Did you do all the cooking when you were growing up?

Barker: Why, sure! My daddy did it until I got big enough to stand on a box, and then we did it. During threshing, of course, we

had a cook shack that the flaps raised up on, and the table slipped down. He kept a cook around when we had a bunch of hired hands. Why, we always had to eat in the cook shack. We had a cook.

Singleton: Was it a local person?

Barker: We tried to get Bergers, one of the Berger men. Boy! They were the best cooks you ever ate from, and, of course, they felt sorry for me because I was so darn little and skinny. I looked like a "killdee" [killdeer]. They would cook these pies. They would poke everything down me that they could get down to try to get me to gain some weight. I looked terrible. I'll tell you what. When I was about twenty years old, I weighed eighty-six pounds. I was so...I looked terrible. I ain't lying. I was ashamed to go anywhere. I have a friend now, and she is horrible to look at. She is so poor. She is nothing but frail. I worry about her. She says she eats all the time, and she acts like she feels good.

Singleton: What kind of social...it sounds like you worked all the time, but you must have gone to some parties and gone out socializing some?

Barker: Oh, yes, we had these old country dances and parties. The Thomases would have some parties, and the Vaughns would give parties.

[Tape 1, Side 2]

Renner: So, you would have little dances around here. Would you have a fiddler to come in?

Barker: Oh, yes, we had fiddlers, guitar players. I used to play the guitar. This guy lived [over here] in the field, Jess Matheson. He is the best fiddler you ever saw, and Harry Vine and he used to play over at KDNT. He could play the Hawaiian guitar until you'd get...everybody in the country played something. They didn't have these big high-powered cars to get in and run off somewhere. You went in a wagon or walked. Which we didn't, because all my life my daddy didn't believe in that. We

was better off than anybody else. We always had a car. Other people had to go in wagons and teams, but we didn't. When I was thirteen years old, my daddy bought me a Nash that the top let down, and the window shield let down--a four-door. It had an Elgin clock on it. I was in Denton, and we went to a picture show, me and a bunch of girls once, and they stole my Elgin clock out.

Singleton: Was it in the dash?

Barker: Elgin clock on a car. It had a heater on it under the seat. Back in them days, that was something great. I was thirteen years old, so you would have to figure out what model it was. But I couldn't...Daddy started driving to town one day. He came walking in, and he had turned too short and run off the corner of a bridge. You had to know how to drive that car. It was so long you couldn't just turn it like an ordinary car, because they didn't know how to make them turn like that. On Saturday I would go around and gather up all the

girls my age, and we would go to town. Then on Sundays we would get out and ride around and flirt with the boys. That's what we done.

Singleton: That sounds familiar.

Barker: I could have had any of the little boys I wanted, but I didn't want any of them. I had a few of the girls mad at me because they thought the boys wanted me, and they thought I wanted them. One of them wrote me a letter one time, and I lost it, and they took it and nailed it up on the church for everybody to read when they went in the church house.

Singleton: Which church did you go to?

Barker: I went down here to Vaughn Town. The church now is up here at Gribble Springs. It's our church. They sold it to them, so I don't go there now. I don't go to any church. I went to Gribble Springs. The 4th day of August, the preacher came down here and wanted me to come to church. My son was here, and I said, "I can't, but I will come tomorrow night." So, I went on

the 5th. I don't have time. I don't get up in the morning, and at night I am too big a coward to go by myself. My husband worked in Denton and belonged to a church in Denton. Anyway, I didn't go to church. Of course, I won a Bible. I used to go to church. I won a Bible at Bible School, and I got more Bibles than anyone in the whole world. I read the Bible through twice in my life. You name it, and I have done it. I have!

Singleton: **It is good to have a full life. It is good to have your life be like that...**

Barker: **You sure do get tired. That ain't nothing. Back in the Depression, I cut every man's hair in this country. I ran a barbershop for free on Sunday. Everybody came in for me to cut their hair. I am a pretty darn good hair cutter, too.**

Singleton: **How far away did they come from?**

Barker: **From everywhere they could get to here. Sometimes it would take them all day to drive--free hair cut.**

Singleton: **And a woman hair-cutter, too. That must**

have been a real treat for them?

Barker: **It was terrible. You got tired. I cut as high as twelve and thirteen in one day, and still had to do my work. I had to turn them away, and they had to come back the next day. Of course, the far ones away, I went ahead and cut; the ones close...there was a house [over here] in the field; there was two houses. There was a house across the road, right across the road from each other, and one [up here] on the corner, one [over there], and one [right down there], and one [over here].**

Singleton: **How many acres of land did these farms have? A hundred? Two hundred?**

Barker: **Yes, we owned 250 acres. See, [this] used to be the main road to Pilot Point.**

Singleton: **So, everybody would have their farm...**

Barker: **They would stop. They would stop and get water, get a drink and stuff. When they came back, they would stop and talk. Of course, Daddy knew everybody in the whole world. He was head of the Farm Labor**

Union. He was president of it. You know, there weren't many people who had educations back then, that had brains enough to be anything. So, they had to use somebody that was educated.

Singleton: **Where did your dad go to college?**

Barker: **Denton.**

Singleton: **He went to North Texas?**

Barker: **Yes.**

Singleton: **Back in the old, old days?**

Barker: **Back in the old days, he went with...I bought a car when I was in Fort Worth, and I got to talking to this man. Anyway, I had been to a whole bunch of places, and they wouldn't let me buy it in my name because I was buying it on credit. They wouldn't let me buy it in my name because I was buying it on credit. They said it had to be in my husband's name. I said, "My husband ain't going to pay for the damned car, and it ain't going to be bought in his name!" So, anyway, I finally came to this car...Mr. C. B. Continent. I come to find out him and my**

daddy went to college together. So, he said, "Well, sure, you can buy that car in your name." He even offered me a job with a whole lot more money than what I was making, but I wouldn't go down to Fort Worth. So, anyway, when I looked at the car, we went in there. I came back, and my husband said, "Haven't I got to fill out some papers?" I said, "No, you haven't got to fill out any papers. It's all mine." So, anyway, I bought the car in my name. But, you know, you need your own identity. I'll tell you one thing. I have lived by myself so cotton-pickin' long. I was thirty...we married in June 7th, and then on August 4th, I would be thirty-two. I had spent most of that time of my life by myself and was my own boss. So, by gosh, you don't get bossed around very easy. There wouldn't be nobody in the world who would put up with me for thirty-two years but Barker. That is the only man in the world that would have. We didn't boss each other around.

Singleton: Do you have some questions?

Renner: I would like to find out some more about the social life that you were leading out here. We heard a little bit about dances and parties.

Barker: That's about it. On Saturday, if we got enough money together, we sometimes would go to the picture show. I think it cost a dime to get in.

Renner: That was at Denton?

Barker: Oh, yes! See, I had a car, and gas was nine cents per gallon, and so everybody would rake up some money, and we would get enough gas. I had the car, and we could get enough money for gas, and we would all go to the picture show.

Renner: Well, the dances and parties that you did, would you have them at different people's houses week to week?

Barker: Yes. Then after I got married...see, I married when I was sixteen years old to a Vaughn. You might have known that I lived in Vaughn Town. It was nothing but right that I married a Vaughn. Well, anyway,

then we separated in 1940, and then in 1942, I guess, I went to Dallas and went to work. I worked there until 1944. I just worked two years, I guess. My son is a Vaughn. He was from my first marriage. Barker and I didn't have any kids. I had one kid, and that cured me of the habit right there. One is all in the world anybody needs (chuckle). That's true!

Renner: **I get the feeling that your family was real, real active with the community.**

Barker: **My daddy was, but my mama wasn't. My mama was...she just liked to stay home and look pretty. I don't know what good that done. I liked to go and look ugly. I did good to get my face washed, and my hair. Mr. "Bud" Gentle said he never saw me that I didn't have grease on my face until I was twenty-five years old. When we worked those motors over, I had to help, and I helped do everything.**

I was "daddy's boy." Oh, God, I loved my daddy! When my daddy died, I was

at a total loss. I didn't have anybody to ask anything because I didn't believe anything anybody else said. And up to this dying day, I don't. I believed every word...my daddy wouldn't tell me...my daddy was educated, and he was smart. If I needed to know anything, my daddy could tell me. I haven't known anybody like that since. I use my own judgment, which isn't so hot sometimes (chuckle).

Singleton: **So, when we talk about the community, we are talking about what mainly used to be the old Vaughn Town?**

Barker: **Yes, old Vaughn Town. See, at one time this was Cosner. It had a post office, blacksmith shop, and everything, dry goods store, grocery store. It was a town at one time. It was on the map.**

Singleton: **Are there any Cosners left in town or around here?**

Barker: **They were dead before I was born. Then it went to Vaughn Town, because that was all there was here, was Vaughns. Vaughns! Vaughns! Vaughns! Vaughns--and us, of**

course. Aubrey Vaughn had twelve kids, so that was a pretty big family. But you know what? Everytime one of them comes, they come to see me.

Singleton: Where did they all move off to?

Barker: Well, there are some that live up here at Sadler. There are some who live...I think there is one that lives close to McKinney somewhere; some live in Florida; some live in New York; some live in Detroit. One of the girls, that I hadn't seen in forty years, lives in Detroit.

About a week...it might have been two weeks before Barker died. Well, this one that lives up at Sadler, he brought his wife. I had never saw his wife, but I heard that he had been...somebody said that he was really a swinger or something like that. He said, "Billy, I got married again the other day, and I am taking my new wife around and introducing her to all my people. I brought her by to see you." I just let it all sink in. When Jack Vaughn came by in about a week, and I was

telling him about Gaylon and his new wife, he said, “My God! That is the same old wife! He has never been married anymore! That is the same old wife!” But, see, he pulled it on me because I had never seen her. He really let me have it, and she didn’t say a word.

There was a knock on the door, and I went to the door, and it was Gaylon. He said, “Billy, I brought you a new woman this time. Really, I did!” I said, “Oh, yes, Gaylon. Tell her to get out and come in.” When she came in, he said, “Aren’t you going to look at her?” I was picking up my paper, I guess. Anyway, I looked up, and I said, “Well, Frances!” And she said, “You know, you are the only person that has known me. My brothers and sisters didn’t even know me.” She had been gone about thirty-five years, and they hadn’t seen her. I hadn’t seen her in forty years, and I knew her.

Singleton: **So, all the Vaughns had moved off pretty much?**

Barker: Some live in Denton, but none live around here.

Singleton: What about other people that lived in the area? Did their kids move off?

Barker: They were Vaughns. This was Vaughn Town. The Sheltons lived [over there]. Well, Aunt Lottie died here about three weeks ago, and they didn't even tell me. They thought I already knew it. I don't know how they think I would know it. My husband brought the paper every day that he was alive. He worked in Denton. But I don't get the paper anymore, because I don't go to town much. So, they had already buried her. She had lived over there all her life, and her boy lives over there now. I told my cousin, Claude's wife, Ida Mae...she is married again now. She is married to a Hester over at Sanger, but she calls me all time. She is kin to...her mother was a Shelton, and they have an old bachelor Shelton over here. I don't know whether he has ever been married or not. I haven't seen him but

once in my life, and he stopped the sun from coming up, he is so ugly.

I told Ida Mae, "I think I will start calling Kenneth. I'm afraid to go by myself at night." See, I wanted to go to the Denton fair, but I couldn't go because I didn't have anybody to go with me. I wanted to go to that "co-op" dinner they are giving, but I am scared because, see, I don't want to go anywhere by myself at night. I am a big coward. I have to be in at dark. So, I said, "I think I will call Kenneth and see if he doesn't want to go with me." And, sure as I did, everybody would accuse me of going with him, and I wouldn't be accused of that for nothing in the world. But you do feel like it because he is by himself and I am by myself, and we could share the car, and I wouldn't be afraid because, boy, one look at him, and they never would stop running. Then they would look at me, and they would sure let us alone. But, anyway, I wouldn't do it for nothing.

Singleton: Did you know any of the other Hesters?

Barker: I know all the Hesters.

Singleton: And they are all living in Denton?

Barker: They are all dead but Steve Hester. Oscar Hester lived [down here] in the bottom for a long time. When I went to school, I went with Dorothy, the girl. She is my best friend. They lived [right up yonder] in a log house. Going up the hill going back over [that away], there was a house there. That was where she lived. [That's] where Oscar Hester lived then, and she and I went to school. We were buddies in school. Well, then they moved down here in the bottom on the Hester place, and Dorothy married Ray Jones. She lives [up here] by Fairview. She married Jones, though. She married "Bud" Jones.

Singleton: So, she is Dorothy Jones?

Barker: Yes, she is a Jones. She was a Hester. She is about my age, or she may be older, or she may be younger; but we went to school at the same time.

Singleton: She lived all around this area pretty

much?

Barker: No, just the two places.

Singleton: Just the two places here. We are also trying to get together a list of other people to talk to about this area because Jim and I kind of came in on the project--Scott kind of dropped in on it--and it was already going, so if you can think of anybody else we ought to talk to...we have heard the name of Hester; we heard about the Wilsons; we have talked to some of the Sadaus.

Barker: The Sadaus and I are the only old ones left in this country--the only ones that ever stayed here long enough to know anything.

Singleton: Would Dorothy be good for us to talk to?

Barker: I don't have any idea. Steve would. Steve knows all about my daddy's thresher because he worked with it all the time.

Singleton: He might be good for us to talk to.

Barker: He worked with my daddy's thresher all the time.

Renner: Where is he located?

Barker: **In Sanger. Everything is there. She has given me the way to get there a hundred times, but it is in the new addition where the bridge is, on the southwest part. I go over there all the time, and I don't even go by.**

I just want to get back home so I can cry in my own sobbing tears. We had so much. We were getting everything where when we retired we would have everything that we would ever need. He had bought him a new gun, and we had everything that we would ever need. Then he had to "kick the bucket" [die]. I don't do anything but bawl. I don't want to go anywhere, and I don't want to do nothing. All I do, I make myself. I liked to never start driving that truck. That was his. I didn't even have to have these glasses before he died.

Hester...[that] is where they live. They live at 221 Hillcrest Drive. She has told me how to get there, how to come. They have been trying...they came out here

a couple of times. I don't think he ever worked for the sawmill, but he worked for the thresher. I don't know whether he pitched or ran the bundle wagon or what he did, but he would work for Daddy during harvesttime.

Singleton: **Anybody else that you can think of that might be good for us talk with?**

Barker: **So many of them are dead. I was thinking the other day that just about everybody I know but a few are dead. All of the friends I got live in Dallas, and I am up here. Of course, Linda Allen [over here] is my friend, but not a close friend. I don't understand the Sadaus. I never have been close to them. They are good neighbors. We do anything for each other, but they are just not my kind of people. I stayed up there when I was fifteen years and helped her cook for the thresher. I slept upstairs. I must have been a pretty good cook to please her--to please Germans. When they moved over to Uncle Charlie's house, they called it, to cook**

over there, they sent me by myself to do the cooking, so I must have been a pretty good.

Renner: **Did the Sadaus socialize very much in the community, or did they pretty much stay to themselves?**

Barker: **Did Carl tell you how his grandpa died?**

Renner: **Got dragged to death.**

Barker: **I remember that. I remember my daddy going up there.**

Renner: **The team took off? Got spooked or something?**

Barker: **Well, he was harrowing. I guess so. You can get killed that way. I don't know how in the world I survived. I used to put a plank on the harrow, and I had four of the wildest mules you ever seen in your life to drive. They were so wild my daddy couldn't hitch them up. They would try to paw him. But they felt sorry for me, I guess, and I would drive the harrow. You are not supposed to do that. If I would have fell, run over something and fell, either way I could have been killed, but I**

was as tough as a boot. They didn't make anything that I wouldn't try; they don't make anything I wouldn't try now.

I can do a little bit of what anybody can do a whole lot of. These people who say, "I can't," I hate that word: "I can't"; "I can't do that"; "I don't know how to do that." If you don't know how, learn. I can learn how to do anything. That's just like me. I didn't know how to crochet, but I crocheted a potholder. I never had time for all that kind of stuff. Nobody showed me, so I just bought me a book and got me some crochet thread. I just wanted to say I could crochet. It wasn't the prettiest thing you ever looked at.

Singleton: Did you crochet in here?

Barker: No, my aunt gave me [these]. I ain't got that good yet.

Renner: When your dad was working the land, did he use both mules and his steam engines back then?

Barker: Yes, he did the breaking with the big

gasoline engine, but the harrow...we didn’t have no equipment to go with only one way, and double disks, and he harrowed with it some. But a lot in these little fields, we used the team and then the drill. We drilled most of it. We just had two drills. We did that with teams, mules. We had some of the meanest mules that you would ever know. My brother broke one of them to ride. That was impossible to ever get done, but he did it. And that poor kid, he was beat, bruised, and black.

Renner: **Now, did you plant all your crops, that is, both cotton and the grain?**

Barker: **And the corn.**

Renner: **And corn. You would plant all of those, but you would hire out for the cotton harvest?**

Barker: **Yes, we hired pickers to pick it, and we would hire choppers. We did the plowing, but we hired pickers and choppers. But we usually gathered the corn ourselves, because our wheat harvest would be gone,**

or it would done be over with, and we would be breaking. But we would quit to gather our corn.

Renner: **What use would the corn be?**

Barker: **For our feed and meal. We would have it ground for meal. Back in those days, you had your own wheat and meal. That saved. Which we didn't never...when I was growing up, we didn't have cows. Daddy couldn't even stand to smell milk. He would "upchuck" [vomit]. We didn't have cows. See, he liked sheep. His daddy was a sheep raiser. He would raise six and seven hundred head of sheep at a time. Daddy's brother was a sheep shearer, and he went everywhere shearing sheep.**

Singleton: **Did you have sheep on this land?**

Barker: **No, over at Bolivar. See, that is where Daddy was raised. Originally, the Simpsons came from Illinois, close to Saint Louis but out in the country. We went back there visiting when I was about ten years old, and this uncle, Uncle Jim Simpson, was Daddy's brother. He owned a**

lumberyard in Saint Louis, and this house had an elevator in it because it was so big and tall. They had a lot of storms and wind out there. He had a whole floor underground, so when it came up bad, they would go down there. I had to sleep on the top floor, so I could get to ride the elevator way up to the top floor. It was the first time I had ever been on an elevator. Now, I would have been scared to death. I am a coward now. I don't want to be up high. I have never ridden in a plane, and I am not going to.

Did you know my brother was making a commercial flyer when he was...he already had his private license, and he was going to college at night and flying in the daytime through the GI Bill. He was making a commercial flyer, and I wouldn't even go out to the airport with him.

Renner: **Was there a cotton gin over here at Sanger?**

Barker: **Yes, right here in town. You know, it is close to "Nigger Town." You know where**

that is? Well, you go right down, and I guess it is the main street. Yes, that ain't but one main street, and that is Bolivar. Well, go down it and cross the railroad track, and you know where that factory is? Right back southeast of there was the gin. You know this house coming out this Highway 455? Well, when you come out of Sanger and come around that curve, that is made out of the old gin. That has a lot of the old gin lumber in it. It was up there--that old gin. They moved it there, and he bought it. But that is where the old gin was, and then the old wheat thing, where they sold grain and everything, was right where it is now, but it isn't much now.

Renner: **Is that close to where they built it? Same place?**

Barker: **That is where it was.**

Renner: **What about your corn meal? Was it milled at the same place?**

Barker: **Yes. They bought everything. It was a big outfit then.**

Renner: How much would it cost to have your stuff milled over there?

Barker: It couldn't have been much because people didn't have money. I don't really know the price of it because I never saw any money. I didn't know what money was back then.

Renner: There weren't any small family mill operations, were there?

Barker: Not any here. If it was, it was [way up there] and not in this country. My daddy was the only big operator, I guess, for a long time. He was the only one that had a truck. Of course, they had their wagons, but you could get there so much faster with a truck.

He had to always furnish the log wagons that he hauled. He had two log wagons with iron wheels, big, wide iron wheels. Then they had these boomers. You put them on there, and then you would pull these boomers down with those log chains. I still have one of the log chains. I don't know how come me to end up with one

of them. But, anyway, he always had to lend them to the people that were going to bring the logs, because nobody could afford them. He had two of them chains, though.

That sawmill was fascinating, to be so perfect. Now, it had to be perfect because them saws were flying. I will hunt those pictures up. I don't know exactly where, but I will hunt them up. I have pictures of the sawmill and thresher, both.

Renner: **That would be great. I would like to come over and take a camera along and take a picture of your picture.**

Singleton: **I can do that; I have done it several times. Taking pictures of pictures would be great because we have gotten several descriptions.**

Barker: **Would you like to see my arrowheads that I showed the other guys?**

Singleton: **Sure.**

Barker: **They took a bunch of pictures of them. I found one of them in a skull. They asked**

me why I didn't I keep the skull. I said, "Are you kidding?" I gave it a great, big kick. I said I didn't know how...these arrowheads fascinated me, so I was so proud of them. I hung onto to them, and do you know what? That is a many year to hang on to them.

Singleton: **When did you find these?**

Barker: **When I was ten, eleven, twelve years old, and besides that I have a bunch of pearls in a bottle somewhere that I got out of mussel shells. I used to go to the creek and get the mussels and cut them open and get the pearls out. You could cut a hundred sometimes and never find a cotton-pickin' pearl. I have a bottle full. Now, [this] is the one that I got out of the skull. These others were broke up pretty bad. They said that, according to the color of the rock, they were about 2,000 years old. [That] one came out of the skull.**

Renner: **Did you find all of these around the creek?**

Barker: No, I found them [right down there], right on...

Renner: Southeast a little bit?

Barker: Right [over there], right below [that] house [there]. There used to be a thicket there with big rocks and everything. The Indians hid out there. They would come out there and kill the people to get the food, I guess. They would hide out. My grandmother said that over on Clear Creek, right up above the bridge, her daddy had got in there and dug a cave, down in the water, then dug it up high, great big, so that when they would see the Indians, they would crawl in the water and get up in that cave and stay until the Indians had left.

Singleton: It must have been some wild territory out here.

Barker: Well, it was back in the Indian days. I thought I had another good one. Everybody gets in here that wants to sew anything. I ought to move them. They want to sew, and they get in my box. I

keep everything...

Renner: **The place where your dad would set up the sawmill, would he set it up in the same place down here by the creek or just move from place to place?**

Barker: **He had it in two different places that I know of. That's all that I ever remember about that. The first time, he had it right down there close to the sluice, and then the next time he moved it on down closer to a bigger sluice, but he never did take it completely to the creek. But you know how people have everything posted now. They won't let you go in; they won't let you look; they won't let you do nothing. Daddy sawed lumber and made round tables and benches and put about four tables and benches down close to the creek. Of course, horses and mules, they clean things. Cows don't, but they do. It's just like pavement.**

So, anyway, he would build those tables and things, and they would come out from Dallas and everywhere else and picnic

and stay the whole weekend, and sleep down there. But he had them a regular campground built, tables and everything, and where they could cook. Now they keep it posted. You can't even get in, and it's locked. You know what is the reason? People is so cotton-pickin' mean now and try to tear it up, because they get mad because they can't get in. Daddy just let them in and gave them the picnic ground. They were welcome, and nobody tore up anything. The reason they are tearing it up now is because they are so hateful to them, I think.

They used to have...it was a deep hole of water, and then on down was the ripple, see. It was the kind of water for kids and things. I used to go down here, and I would put my skillet on my back. I had my pack, and I would go [down here], right straight down there, from Mud Branch, and there was a spring. I would dig the spring out when I would first get there, and then I would take a cup, and

you could get ice water, spring water. Then I would catch my fish, and I would build me a little ol' brush fire, and I would cook my fish and sit down there and cook my fish and drink that spring water. It was fun.

Singleton: **That sounds great!**

Barker: **You think I would get down there by myself now? The wolves would eat you up. They wouldn't eat me up because I am a dead shot. See that dog? Somebody put him here. I don't know who put him here, but we took him off. We ran him off. We did everything, but he wouldn't leave. He hung out there at the barn. We had hay then when we had cows, and he hung under this 2x4. He had been there over a week. I said, "If he wants to stay here this bad, I will let him stay." So, I built him a pen out there. The night Barker died, that night my cousin came, he went out to the pen and got that dog and brought him in here. When I brought him in one time before, he was just scared to**

death. That dog just settled down like this house was his. He is boss. He won't let a stranger get out the car. He won't let nobody...he goes right to their throat. He's a killer. He is a big killer. He said, "I don't want to ever catch that dog out of the house." Besides that, I am a dead shot. I have three automatic rifles. One of them is going to fire. You better believe it! I can throw one of them down and get the other one right quick. I've got a shotgun. I'll tell you what I used to do. I'd put the matches in trees and go out there and strike them, and I would shoot to try to reload these shells, and I could almost get it in perfectly.

Singleton: **Good shot!**

Barker: **You better believe it!**

Renner: **Did your folks do a lot of hunting then?**

Barker: **My brother and I did. My daddy never did have time.**

Singleton: **What animals did you hunt down here? Squirrels?**

Barker: Me and my brother in the wintertime would hunt possums and polecats and sell the hides for money.

Renner: Did anyone trap?

Barker: Oh, yes, there were a lot of people that trapped. I did but I couldn't catch them. They just wouldn't get in there for me. But, you know, they won't let you hunt; they won't let you trap; they won't let you do nothing. You can stand there on that porch at night, and the wolves come out right in front of the house. I have had to run them off. I bought me one of these high-beam lights, and you can shoot all you want to, shotgun or anything, but that don't even scare them. I can take that flashlight I got and do it at that light, and they will take back to that bottom. So, I bought me one of these big sealed beams, or Barker did for me, and you plug it in, and you can put it in the woods anywhere you want with that light. You can shoot yourself to death, and you can't get rid of them. He shot one with

a .22 out here one day, and he laid there. Barker got nearly to him, and he jumped up and run off. It was a wonder he hadn't grabbed him right in the face. You know, if he had shot him with the high-powered rifle, it would have killed him. The wolves are bad here.

Renner: **Did you have trouble defending your livestock?**

Barker: **Yes! They were taking my cows off one night. Of course, I put my cows in the lot every night, but there was one night I hadn't got them up yet; and they had circled them, and they were trying to take them off. I shot at them, but that didn't do any good. I had to get in the car and go run them off. But I keep the lights on here. I keep a light here and one in the back. They are scared of light. You can take a flashlight and do them, and they will just run like they are shot. You can shoot them, and if you don't hit them, they ain't going nowhere.**

I had a rabid skunk to come this

year, and there is an old cat of somebody's that had four kittens, and he bit every one of them. I called the Denton police, and they came out here and picked it up. It was so poor, and it was just biting everything it came in contact with. I shot it in the side, in the legs, and it was in its last stage. See, they just start running and biting in their last stage. He ran into the carport...he had started out there to the pen. He smelled that dog because I had the dog in the pen until Barker died. So, he was going out there. He smelled it, I guess, and then he smelled me. He started toward me, so I ran into the house and got the gun and went back. I riddled him, and he still got in there. He still came onto me. He went into the carport. I didn't have any cars in there, and he came in there, and he got the kittens. He bit every one of them and the mama. She fought him. She had his face just bleeding. You know how a cat can...he

still caught her right in the throat. So, when he finally turned loose--and he had them all bit--then he smelled me again, and he started toward me. I got him right between the eyes, and he fell. I thought, "Well, I will shoot him another time to make good measurements," and that was the last bullet I had. But, boy, that is the only way you can kill a rabid one! I have talked to people since then. They have no feelings, and they are out of their head. That's the only one.

Singleton: When you were growing up, did you have any rabies epidemics here?

Barker: Yes. We had a mad dog one time that came in. All the thresher hands had to come in to eat supper. We had the cook shack close to the house down there, and all the thresher boys would just come in and wash in here. This mad dog came, and everybody went up on something. Finally, one of them got off and got to the house and got the gun and killed it. A rabid dog bit my grandpa, and when he died, they had to tie

him in the bed, and he was talking just like a rabid dog. Of course, he lived a lot of years. He was old. He was eighty-something, but he died just like a rabid dog when he died. They had to go to Austin then to take all their shots.

Renner: He was bitten by a rabid dog?

Barker: Yes. We called them rabies back then.

Singleton: Any other kind of epidemics come through when you were growing up? Anything like the flu or smallpox?

Barker: Oh, yes, they had the flu, and I think there was a few smallpox cases down close to the creek down there, and typhoid. We had a lot of typhoid fever. We never did, but a lot of them down in the bottom did. They were quarantined, and several of them died. I know my grandpa, Mama's daddy, had to bury one whole family that died. He buried them. They lived in one of his rent places. See, my grandpa, Mama's people, all of them were "big shots." They always had money, the Mayes family did. They were all lawyers and things

like that, “big shots.” There are still a lot of them living. Of course, I can say one thing. The Mayes family have been better to me than the Simpsons, and I always thought more of the Simpsons than I did the Mayes family. But the Mayses, since Barker has died, have been better to me than any of the Simpsons.

Renner: The Mayes family were your grandpa’s Mama?

Barker: No, Mama’s daddy was a Mayes.

Singleton: So, your mom’s...?

Barker: My grandpa on Mama’s side was a Mayes; mine on my daddy’s side was Simpsons.

Singleton: Did they own a lot of land in this area, or were they just more...?

Barker: Yes, they owned a lot of land down in Green Valley. Not in this district, but in the Green Valley area. John Mayes owned [up here], and then the McReynolds family owned [that] up on the hill.

Well, Helen Ruth was a Mayes, but she doesn’t remember. She has been asking me a lot about the Mayes family. She doesn’t know anything about them. Her daddy died

with a heart attack. Her mother, they found her dead in the bathtub. Her brother died young, and she is the only one left of that whole family, and she just doesn't know anything about Mayes family, period. I told her my grandpa came from Kentucky, so they went to Kentucky, and they found...she sent me a whole bunch of pictures. I did have them here the other day looking at them. I will find them, too, because tombstones and things of the Mayes family are in Kentucky. I told them about where he came from, so they went back there, and they still have a church with the Mayes picture in it that was donated to that church. So, she just didn't know anything about them.

Of course, I know a whole lot about it because I heard my grandpa talk. He used to talk about them. He came from Kentucky, and my grandmother came from Tennessee. She was a Boles. Their cemetery is [over here], and it is up

above Duck Creek. You go across Duck Creek, and it is sort of up on a hill over on the left.

[Tape 2, Side 1]

Renner: When did the Mayes family and the Simpsons and all these folks of your grandmother's come into this country?

Barker: I don't know, but I can find out for you. I can tell you the next time you come. My cousin over here at Bolivar has written about them. She has been researching on the old Simpson generation for the last five years, and she has got it all wrote down--when they came here and all about it. There is a cemetery over there that my grandpa has some people buried at--his first wife. His wife died when Daddy was born. He married again. His first wife is buried over there. I have went over there and have driven all over that country. I've went down dead-end roads; I've had to turn around. I have rode all over that country, and I never have found that cemetery yet. I'd give anything in

the world to find that cemetery, but I never have found it.

Singleton: **We know a woman down in Denton who might be able to help you. She knows quite a bit about the cemeteries in this area. Maybe she could help you out.**

Barker: **Well, Estelle should be able to help me. She's a little older than I am. She's the one who's writing this book on it. She goes everywhere. Every year she takes a vacation. Her husband died of a heart attack, I think. It took him a little bit longer to die than my husband. My husband never gasped or breathed another time. He just fell over. He never did gasp; he never did breathe; he never did nothing. He just died. We were fixin' to go to town. He was kidding me, and we was laughing. And when he died, he was laughing. He died right in front of me. He was kidding me. He always called me "Slowpoke." He said, "I want you to hurry up! I want to make every store count. Today I got a bunch of things I got to**

do.” So, he was hurrying me, and, anyway, the next thing I knew, he said, “Billy! I love you to death!” And that was the last thing he said, and then he was dead. I held him up, and I tried to get him to come to. I beat him in the back. I done everything in the world, and I worked for about forty-five minutes. I pulled my back all out of whack, and I still can’t hardly get around. I still suffer from it. Anyway, he never did breathe another time; he didn’t do nothing. I got a pillow and sheet and called the doctor to come out. I knew he was dead, but you got to have a doctor to say they’re dead, I guess. But that’s terrible! If you’re expecting them to die or if they’re sick, it would be different. But if they ain’t never been sick a day in their life, and they just die, that’s rough. I wonder sometimes if I’m going to make it out the door. Why, he was in a lot better shape than I was. My God, he’d never been sick! He did tell me, “Billy, if I ever did get

sick, I won't live." And he never got sick; he just died. He never was sick in his life. He never did have a headache. He was just as healthy as a horse. And I was born with a headache, I think (chuckle).

Renner: **Your grandparents were the first to come here. They moved here from Tennessee. They weren't born here. They moved here.**

Barker: **Yes. I think they came from...I'm pretty sure that Pa Paw and two or three of his brothers came here from Kentucky in a wagon train, I imagine. They had to because Uncle John...now Uncle John lived [up there], and Uncle Howard lived [over there] across the creek. Pa Paw lived on [this side] of the creek. So, I know they had to have come together from Kentucky--to get up enough nerve to come, you know.**

Singleton: **That was pretty common.**

Renner: **What was your grandfather's first name?**

Barker: **Jimmie D. I don't know what the "D." was for. Nobody ever told me.**

Renner: **We have some people doing Census research,**

looking at the old Census files for family names and everything.

Barker: **My grandmother's name was Eddy, which can be a boy's or a girl's name. It is the same with me. "Billy" can be a boy's or girl's name. But I was never called "Billy" until the last few years. I was always called "Bill." Mr. Sadau always called me Ella. See, my name is Billy Ella. He'd say, "I ain't calling you `Billy.'" I used to work for him a lot. Mr. Sadau never would call me Billy.**

And Jessie Earl Schertz, who lives [right up here], has been good to me. They come down from time to time. He brought me a jar of wine the other night. The doctor said that if I drank a little wine before I go to bed, I might sleep. Anyway, he came down. He called me on the phone. He found out…he said, "I'm trying to find Ella Barker." I said, "You're talking to her." He said, "Why didn't you tell me that was your name!" I said, "Why? I don't go by it. I go by 'Billy.'"

He said, "'Billy' ain't your name." I said, "'Billy' is my name."

Renner: **You know, talking about wine, we found out that the Sadaus had grapes and other fruits and all. Did people around here grow any grapes and make wine--make fruit wines out apples or peaches or things like that?**

Barker: **No, but I made a gallon two years ago, and it's the best wine in the world. But I don't know how I made it. I made it out of Welch's grape juice. [telephone interruption] That was Betty Schertz. See, they was raised [right up here]. Mr. Schertz bought him a thresher, and Daddy had to learn him how to operate it, though. Of course, I grew up with all those kids._____ and I struggled together. Well, I didn't have any kids, and she had two little kids. Anyway, we used to give baby showers for other women, and we'd give parties, game parties and stuff like that in the daytime. A club is what I'm trying to say. We had a club,**

and we'd meet at her house and at my house. Anyway, we struggled it out together. We was both so poor that we couldn't buy a piece of hamburger meat, but we made it.

Renner: **Of course, the Schertz family has been here for a long time.**

Barker: **Always. Of course, the old ones have died, and the young ones have moved away now.**

Renner: **I want to find out a little bit more about fruit growing around here. We see all those beautiful pecan orchards [over here], and I do know that people did raise fruit around here. Then it kind of petered out or something.**

Barker: **My daddy had a big orchard when we had all those places. Right over the hill [down there], there is kind of sandy loam soil, and we had big peach orchard. I guess we had thirty or forty trees. We had a big peach orchard, and we sold a lot of peaches. Of course, my daddy wasn't like people like me who just stick a stick in**

the ground, you know. He found out how you'd do it right to make it produce, and we'd have peaches so big that they wouldn't go in a jar. You know, we'd cut them in two, and the halves wouldn't even go in. We grew a lot of fruit.

I had apple trees out here, and last year they had so many on them, and I wouldn't pull them off, so I killed my trees. It was such a dry year that I lost both my apple trees, but I really don't care because I don't eat apples. I don't know why I can't eat apples, but if I eat an apple, I have to need a doctor. And that's the best smelling fruit, and I like apples more than anything in the world. If I eat an apple just once in a great while. . .I can eat a cooked apple, but, boy, I have ulcers just like my daddy. [There] sets my medicine [up there] that I have to take around-the-clock. I have bleeding ulcers, so I have to take that medicine. So, now I have to eat oats and food that ain't fit for hogs to eat. I

can’t eat like a human--just junk.

Renner: **When your dad went out and used little charges of dynamite to blow holes to plant trees, were those peach trees he was planting at that time?**

Barker: **Yes.**

Renner: **How big an orchard was that?**

Barker: **About thirty trees. I’ll bet you I’m just about right. It was six trees wide and five trees long, I think. I’m pretty darn sure of that. They had to be perfect for him--the rows.**

Singleton: **Were those the Alberta peaches?**

Barker: **He had every kind. He had both the late Albertas and the early Albertas. We had one that would be just as pink around the seed. It would be white around the outside--I mean, white. It was real pink on the inside, and that was the best tasting peach. I don’t even know what kind it was. I’ve never really had a peach since then.**

My daddy owned a place in Oklahoma. He done some land trading with his

brothers, but I don't know just how he done it. Anyway, then he quit tending to the orchards, and Daddy got sick. He started having these operations, and nobody took care of it, so it finally died out.

I have three peach trees [out here] that my uncle came over and planted for me last year. Next year they'll be big enough, but I've got to trim them up next year, if I'm still here. I don't know what kind of peaches they are. I just don't do well with plants. They don't like me. I just look at them, and they die. My potted plants just live long enough to look pretty, and then they go and die.

Singleton: **Did you can your peaches? You said that you did give a lot of food away.**

Barker: **Yes.**

Singleton: **Did you have enough that you gave them out to the neighbors?**

Barker: **Yes, we gave them to the neighbors because they didn't have any. A woman over at**

Sanger used to give me my permanents. She was the first person who ever gave me one. My hair...she would never give me a cheap one, and I couldn't afford a high-priced one. So, I give her squash and stuff every year because I love her. She's retired now, but I still give her garden vegetables. So, for people who can't raise them, don't have any place to raise them, I just give them to them. And I have lots of tomatoes that I give them. I've had the prettiest garden you ever saw. I've got a good tiller, but I didn't do nothing this year. The roasting ears were out there, and they weren't ready. They were too hard, but I still cut them off the stalk and pressure-cooked it, so I saved a lot of my corn. I then froze it. I've still got a lot of stuff for me to eat this winter.

Renner: **During the Depression there was no money to be had. Would folks around here trade stuff? Like, if somebody wanted some work, would they work for food rather than**

money?

Barker: **If these people [over here], for example, had turnips, and if you had something else, you'd switch and exchange vegetables, you know. My daddy would give peaches for fruit jars so we'd have something to can them in. We didn't have any money. We'd take lettuce, and we'd take cabbage heads, and we'd take that stuff and trade it for fruit jars so we could have somewhere to put it.**

I canned one year. I canned three jars a day--365 jars--to eat off of. We raised some chickens, and we canned the chickens so you'd have meat, you know. We'd kill a hog and can that up. The only way you could can a hog to do any good was to make sausages, and then you'd cure out your other parts. We had a smokehouse.

Singleton: **When did this tornado come through?**

Barker: **I believe it was in 1937. My baby was three months old. I saw it coming, and I could have gone to the cellar. But I had dishes to wash. I was one of those that,**

boy, when you've got to wash your dishes, you've got to wash your dishes, you know. And, boy, you better keep the house dusted, and you better keep everything washed. It's got to be perfect, now. That's the way I was. I had just gotten the dishes washed, and I heard it.

I took my baby, and I had a big, thick quilt. I rolled him [this way], and I rolled him [that way], and I put him up on the bed. I was standing in the door, and the house was right where it is now, and there was a tree outside. The house went up and came back down.

There was a fire. Of course, I didn't have running water in the house. I had a little ol' water bucket on the wall. It didn't spill any water. I looked around, and about that time it went up and up and up, and I couldn't see the tree no more. It started rolling, and it just rolled and rolled and rolled--I don't know how many times--in the air. I had a big twin hackberry tree out here, and it landed in

that tree. And that tree was all that stopped it, but it landed right on top of my car.

It burned me full of holes, and, of course, I've been sewed up from one end to the other. The bones came out of my arm [right there], and they took a bunch out of my leg and out of my hip and everywhere else. I have all kinds of scars. Besides, I had just got through canning ten gallons of berries. I had started it that morning, and it was two o'clock in the afternoon on the 8th day of June. Everybody in Denton saw it.

Anyway, my baby...it struck...it just smashed his head flat. My brother crawled up here when the wind was still blowing. It started pouring-down raining after the tornado, and he crawled up here, and he found the baby in amongst a bunch of junk. Every time his pulse would beat, it would shoot blood. But the doctor said that's the only way he lived. As it turned out, my son was unconscious for about three

months.

Well, it threw my husband out of the house, and it didn't even hurt him. It cut me. Well, the undertakers stayed there for two weeks, and it didn't even bleed. They was fixin' to haul my body off all the time it turned around. They moved me up here in Aubrey Vaughn's house. Dr. Hinkle was my doctor, and Kenneth's wife stayed with me. She didn't even go home. They gave me blood transfusions. They brought the whole hospital to the room out there. I was so dadgummed cut up that you couldn't even move me. I'd fall apart, you know. That was in 1937, and it was terrible.

Whenever they moved the house back, they wanted to know where I wanted it. I said I wanted it in the same spot. Everybody thinks I'm a "nut." If a tornado is coming anywhere, and anybody is around here, they get in their car and just fly. They say you'll always return, you know, and I was back right where I was

and got blowed away from the identical spot. It can't do that to you twice. Surely to God! That's what I told them: "It can't do that twice, surely to God!" But you know what? I swear to God, as bad as I was hurt and everything, everybody in this country is more scared of clouds than I am. I think if it's your time to go, and it's your way to go, you're going to go. And if it ain't, you're not going. That's it.

Renner: Yes.

Barker: I believe that. And, of course, you can help yourself along a little bit, too, if you want to. But I'm not that scared.

Singleton: Did the baby recover?

Barker: Oh, yes. That's the only one I got. They used to watch him. They didn't know whether he'd be all right or not, you know. Of course, that puncturing was letting all that blood out, but it didn't affect his brain any. He's all right. He's plenty smart. A lot of the times I kid him. I says, "I'm going to get you a

little brother." He'll say, "Mother, I'll kill them." He didn't want any brothers or sisters. He's selfish. He said, "They might get something I wouldn't get." He's forty-four years old now, and he's smaller than what he was when he was sixteen. He was a bigger baby. Everything he does, he's got to call Mama. He's been married, but he's single now. He never had any kids. He told me, "Mother, I'll never make you a grandma." So, I guess I'll never be a grandma, thank God.

I guess that's the reason I have to stay by myself all the time. I just don't care about kids, and I don't like kids. I can't stand kids. I like animals. I got them all over the place. Isn't that funny? I don't like kids.

Singleton: **Yes, some people don't.**

Barker: **I'll tell you what. I used to like kids, but my husband had some of the meanest little nieces and nephews I ever seen in my whole life. They wouldn't make them mind. They'd wreck your place. They'd**

burn and set it on fire and everything else. I never was around kids that didn't obey. Them little varmints made me hate kids. That's mean. I liked kids until then. I had to put up with them. I'll tell you. They used to come up every Sunday and bring them kids, and I never liked kids since.

Renner: **But you like animals.**

Barker: **Oh, yes! And all animals likes me.**

Renner: **Did you run a lot of animals around here? Well, I know you didn't have any cattle.**

Barker: **No. We had horses and stuff, dogs and cats, pet chickens. I never will forget when my brother and I was growing up. We always had a pet chicken apiece. So, one time, one of his died, and we had a funeral. He preached a funeral. We put it in a box, dug a grave. He preached the funeral, and I sang the songs. We was just itty-bitty little kids. We buried that chicken.**

You know, somebody told him about money trees, you know. He got out and

planted money in the yard--planted money. You know, every once in a while some money will wash up in that yard down there. That kid planted all the change he'd get, thinking he was going to grow him a money tree. Wasn't a very bright kid, was he? I guess that's where, once in awhile, there will be some money. I guess not. Of course, I'll find some money in the drive out here once in awhile. People lose it, I guess, you know, people who come to see me. People don't carry money anymore. They can't afford to.

Singleton: **That's true.**

Barker: **My husband one time had a hole in his pocket, and he didn't even know it. Just everywhere he'd walk, he'd lose it. He lost it until he didn't have any more money in his pockets. And I found it, and I wouldn't give it back to him, either. I found most of it. I wouldn't give it back to him.**

I tell you what's up. Until he died, we had water fights. We'd get the water

hose, and, anyway, I just couldn’t resist it now. That’s just me. I can’t resist. I’d be watering, and if he got within ten miles before I could reach that water hose, I let him have it. Then when I let him have it, he’d get one and start at me. We’d have water fights. But I couldn’t help that to save my life.

And to see him with the hood up on his car checking his oil, I’d slip around there some way and blow that horn and he’d bust his head.

I’ll tell you. One time I had this Oldsmobile that I got during the war from a colonel that was going to be shipped overseas. Boy, he had it redone inside and had an air horn put on it. I was going to Sanger, and this old man was right out in the middle of the road, just going down the road. I guess my car was quiet or something, and he just kept going on. I let down that air horn, and he jumped right straight up, and then he went to the side. That liked to scare that man

to death, you know. But I had to get him out of the road. I waited until I got by, and I liked to have cracked up.

My mother was always scary. One time when I was a kid, she was visiting. Daddy rented that house [down there] at the end to some people. That old woman Hunter was a big mama. They'd make me stay with them. She wouldn't let me go to the party. I had to stay home, you know, to guard them. So, I got this cap pistol, and I brought it up through the window [like this], and I just scared the living hell out of them.

Singleton: **Did you have any more questions?**

Renner: **I do have a couple more.**

Barker: **Well, don't let me talk when you want to ask me something.**

Renner: **You said you sold some of the peaches. Where would you market them? Would you go to Sanger? Go down to Denton?**

Barker: **No, you couldn't get enough gas to get to Denton, not during the Depression. You done good to get to Sanger. I think we**

got twenty-five cents a bushel. I don't know whether I sold any or not. We hardly ever sold any. Nobody had any money. We'd trade them. They'd come get peaches and bring ups other things that we didn't have. We didn't have berries. They'd bring us some berries, or they'd bring us some apples or potatoes. We never did have a very good place to raise potatoes. They'd bring us stuff like that, and they'd get peaches. See, everybody traded their stuff to eat, and Daddy kept everybody in flour because he had the wheat, and other people didn't.

Singleton: **What kind of dresses did you wear?**

Barker: **Mine was made out of flour sacks, honey. Well, it was.**

Singleton: **Yes.**

Barker: **We'd get flowered flour sacks until you got enough to make your dress, and your underwear was made out of white flour sacks. I'll never forget the first pair of underwear I ever had--ready-bought ones. My God! I was about fifteen years**

old before I had a ready-made pair of underwear.

Singleton: **Where did you go shopping? In Sanger, then?**

Barker: **I didn’t. Shoot, no. When we got enough money, I think I had three dollars. If we got enough, we went to Denton. Oh, boy! I bought me...oh, God! I was really dressed up, you know.**

Singleton: **Yes.**

Barker: **I said that if I ever got any money...if I ever got anything, I was going to buy me some pretty negligees and all the pretty underwear, you know. I was just going to buy the prettiest clothes you ever saw. I got a bunch of pretty clothes, but I don’t wear it. Do you know what kind of pajamas I sleep in? I got some fancy ones, but I sleep in men’s. I get the smallest size in men’s, and that’s what I sleep in. Shoot, that frilly stuff is just not for me. Of course, back in them days when I was a kid, I would love to have it, but you had no money. Then after I did have**

money, I didn't want it. I'll never forget. I got a fur coat. Everybody had to have a fur coat. I paid on that fur coat for five years. That coat is still brand-new. But you know what? I packed that coat in a Styrofoam icebox, and, honest to God, it's just as pretty as it ever was because who needs a fur coat here? Would you tell me? I don't even wear a coat.

Singleton: Yes.

Barker: And my son...last Christmas a year ago now, he bought me...it looks like mink, but I'm sure it's not. It's got to be imitation. But when they was wearing those leather coats...it's not that lamb's wool. It looks like mink, but it's a beautiful coat. How you going to need a coat? I got suits, and I got pretty sweaters. I mean, designs on them, you know. I got some pretty suits. I wear a suit in wintertime. Then I wear it with a turtleneck sweater or something. Who needs a coat? The car's heated, and the

stores are heated. Besides, the cold don’t bother me no way. When I lived in Dallas, I would stand on the street corner with my sandals on with nylon hose in the snow. My feet didn’t get cold. Do you think I’d put on a pair of shoes like these? Oh, no.