

2-20-1985

## Interview no. 763

Wyndham Kemp White

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### Recommended Citation

Interview with Wyndham Kemp White by Vicki L. Ruiz, 1985, "Interview no. 763," Institute of Oral History, University of Texas at El Paso.

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UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT EL PASO

INSTITUTE OF ORAL HISTORY

INTERVIEWEE:	<u>Wyndham Kemp White (1910-1985)</u>
INTERVIEWER:	<u>Vicki Ruiz</u>
PROJECT:	<u></u>
DATE OF INTERVIEW:	<u>February 20, 1985</u>
TERMS OF USE:	<u>Unrestricted</u>
TAPE NO.:	<u>763</u>
TRANSCRIPT NO.:	<u>763</u>
TRANSCRIBER:	<u>Rebecca Craver</u>

BIOGRAPHICAL SYNOPSIS OF INTERVIEWEE:

Native El Pasoan, attorney and horseman

SUMMARY OF INTERVIEW:

Southern background, his childhood summers in Virginia, college years at VMI, ancestors' role in Civil War, polo playing in El Paso and Juarez, horses, horse shows, and ranching.

Length of Interview: 2 1/2 hours Length of Transcript 58 pages

Wyndham White  
February 20, 1985  
By Vicki L. Ruiz  
Transcribed by Rebecca Craver

R: So you were born on April 23?

W: April 23, 1910.

R: Here?

W: In El Paso, yes. My mother used to always tease me and say I was the only Anglo born in El Paso in those years. In that year.

R: (Chuckles) Were your parents also from El Paso?

W: What?

R: Were your parents also from El Paso?

W: Well, they lived here, yes. My mother was born in Texas. She was born over in East Texas at Calvert. My father came out here from Virginia. Like most people who came to El Paso in those days, he was a tubercular and he came out here at first at Toyah.

R: Um hm.

W: You know where Toyah is?

R: No, I'm not sure.

W: It's about 20 miles this side of Pecos. It's a division point on the Texas and Pacific [Railroad], or was. They call it the Union Pacific now and my father was there for several years and he was a horseman and he came out here and brought a couple of wonderful stallions with him that his father had given him in Virginia.

R: They were thoroughbreds?

W: Yes. And he bred those stallions to selected mares around on these ranches. Some of the people got mad at him because they had mares they were very fond of and my father would not breed with them because he

didn't think they were up to snuff really.

R: Were these mares thoroughbreds or quarter horses or...?

W: Oh no, they were just what we called ... .

R: Range horses?

W: No, little, they were little Mexican mares.

R: Ummm.

W: They weighed 7, 800 pounds at the most.

R: Oh, they are tiny.

W: They were small mares and just cow ponies is what they were. But if he found a mare that, or they brought him a mare that, he approved of and thought would breed well with a thoroughbred, he did.

R: Oh.

W: But he was kind of fussy about it so, uh. He was interested in the horses, of course, and interested in improving the breed.

R: Um hm.

W: And if he didn't think...

R: He was going to do any improvements (Chuckles)...

W: ...there was going to be an improvement in the breed by breeding a good thoroughbred to 'em because they were little, little tiny horses really, compared to his horses. And that was his main interest and that's been sort of a family trait on his side of the family since the beginning of time. His father was a horseman, had a farm, big stud farm up there in Virginia. Well, not really a stud farm, it was a stock farm. He had cows, lots of cattle, and hogs and it was his hogs that supported...

R: Sort of brought in the bacon? (Chuckles)

W: Yeah, that supported everything else. He had imported Berkshire hogs from Virginia, I mean from England.

R: Um hm.

W: And all of his brood stock came from England. He would not, there were not any other good Berkshire hogs in the United States. The Berkshire is a small, short-nosed hog, much smaller than the Poland China for example. The Poland Chinas get to be a thousand pounds, I think, some of them. They can be tremendous big hogs. But the Berkshire never got over, ...I don't know quite what they weighed, but they were not big, big hogs.

R: Um hm.

W: And to me they were very personable animals. They were, uh... . hogs are smart. People don't realize it but hogs in some respects are smarter than dogs. And these hogs of his were awfully smart and they used to tickle me to death. And we would just [be] watching the little pigs,

R: Yeah?

W: See, these little pigs would be all out there together, a whole bunch of them, from two or three litters, you know, all of them about the size and they'd all be nosing around in the grass together and all of a sudden we'd go "woof!" and the whole bunch of them turn and run up a hill as hard as they could.

R: (Laughs)

W: And then turn around and look back to see what had scared them.

R: (Chuckles) But did the Civil War affect your family in any way?

W: Oh yes. My grandfather was in the Confederate Army. And he was just a young kid at the time but he went through the entire war in the Confederate Cavalry.

R: Did he ride with Lee or Nathan Bedford Forrest or was [he] with the Army of Northern Virginia?

W: Yes. He used to talk about Light-horse Harry, I think it was Lee, who

was one of the Cavalry officers. I don't know just what his relationship was to Robert E. Lee but he had some relationship. And then, you know, of course they lived in Lexington and ...

R: Yes.

W: And Thomas S. White, my grandfather, was the son of William S. White who was a Presbyterian minister in Lexington and my great-grandfather was in the first Presbyterian church there. He built it.

R: At Lexington, Virginia?

W: Yes, it's still there and of course my grandfather was part of the Robert E. Lee funeral when he died because Robert E. Lee, you know, went there to Lexington.

R: Right. Right.

W: And took over Washington College which is now Washington and Lee.

R: Oh that's interesting.

W: That side of the family came from that part of Virginia and my mother's side of the family came from Tidewater, Gloucester County.

R: Oh, so they were FFVs or First Family of Virginia? The Tidewater...

W: Well, I don't know. Both of them had big houses and they had lived very well before the Civil War and then after the Civil War they wouldn't have anything.

R: No one did. I mean the South was really devastated.

W: Yeah, well, I mean the ... . Back then in those days [in] my family, "Damn Yankee" was just one word.

R: Right.

W: And my grandfather talked about the things that had happened there and my grandmother was Sally Cameron. Well, the Camerons had owned a tremendous lot of land in that area and they finally ended up with about 200 acres

and the rest of it was just taken away from them by the people that came down after the Civil War. The Camerons at one time owned what is now Hot Springs, Virginia, which is one of the most famous resorts in the world, you know. And his land went clear over into what is now West Virginia and White Sulphur Springs was also on the Cameron land at one time. At least that's the story. I wasn't there.

R: (Chuckles)

W: But that's the story.

R: Oh, the carpetbaggers came and...

W: Yeah, well, they just moved in on them and just, they had no rights at all.

R: No, no.

W: They just took everything from them. So they had a hell of a time right after the Civil War.

R: Oh yeah.

W: And of course my family was always closely attached to Washington and Lee. My father went to Washington and Lee before he went to medical school.

R: Um. So your father was a doctor when he came to Texas?

W: Yes. He was a ... he went to the Medical College of Virginia which was in Richmond but he developed tuberculosis and he came out here and stayed as I said, first at Toyah.

R: That was approximately when? ... at the turn of the century or...?

W: Oh, that was about the turn of the century. I think 1906, somewhere about then and then he came out here.

R: He met your mother in East Texas then?

W: It may have been earlier than 1906, I'm not sure. Somehow or other, time

and dates don't mean a whole lot to me. My uncle, Maury Kemp, he could always..., he'd give you a date for everything and he was always very definite about it and Mother always said, "Maury will give you a date but he's not always exactly correct." [Chuckles] But he was very determined in what he said and did.

R: At the Institute that I'm the director of, we have his diary that he donated before his death.

W: Who?

R: Maury Kemp.

W: Oh, have you?

R: Yes.

W: What diary is it?

R: It's a memoir, a reminiscence that he wrote down.

W: Oh yeah.

R: Just his thoughts.

W: That he dictated that.

R: Yes. He dictated.

W: Yes. I think, oh who was that, she was Mrs. O'Brennan I think it was [who] wrote it up.

R: Uh huh.

W: And I had a heck of a time with him over that. I wanted him to write it because he told wonderful stories of old El Paso. He had grown up here. He'd come in here as a young boy. He was older than my mother, but he came in here as a young boy and grew up in El Paso and he told an awful lot of wonderful stories and I tried an awful, a long time to get him to dictate to that machine.

R: Yes.



W: And he said, "No, I'm not going to be like one of these old sons of bitches that dies, waits til everybody dies and then writes a book."

R: No.

W: And he finally got the idea himself that it would be a good idea and the machine was there and I had shown him how to operate it.

R: Oh.

W: And so he turned it on and he was not a person who would take much in the way of ideas from members of his family.

R: (Chuckles) Your parents met in East Texas? You said your mother was from East Texas. Or did they meet here in El Paso?

W: They met here. Mother came out here as a real young girl, and her mother died in East Texas in childbirth.

[Mrs. White enters.]

Mrs. W: This is Wyndham's mother's history of the Kemp family.

R: Oh, this is nice.

Mrs. W: And she came in 1884.

R: 1884? So a real pioneer to this area.

W: They were not considered pioneers at the time, though.

R: They weren't?

W: No. There were other people here who had been here longer. But uh, they finally became considered ... found themselves looked upon as pioneers, but in the origin they were not considered pioneers because they had come from the East and there were a few people that had been here since the beginning of time. I don't know when they first started in El Paso though.

R: El Paso had been incorporated then. It was not still Magoffinsville or

Franklin.

W: Well, they called it El Paso I think. I guess it was incorporated. I don't know when it was first incorporated, but they came here to El Paso and built a house on Magoffin Avenue. That's where I was born. That's where I lived until I married. And the old house is still down there. The people that finally bought it have painted it white and it looks like holy hell.

R: Oh, no. [Laughs]

W: It was an old red brick house you know. And they painted it white and trimmed it in green. I don't know. It looks sort of strange.

R: Oh, that's sad. So where did you go to school?

W: Well, I first went to San Jacinto. And I was the only Anglo in my class and at that time. I grew up speaking English with a very bad Mexican accent because down there in that area if I didn't speak Spanish when I was out of the house I didn't have anybody to talk to. So Mother, when I was seven years old, six years old I guess, the first summer ... they sent me to Virginia hoping that I'd learn to speak English without an accent. And I came back talking like the Negroes on the farm because they were the ones that paid attention to me and I just stayed with 'em. And I picked up their lingo. I remember Mother calling me and I'd say, "Yassum." And my mother would say to me, "Don't talk to me that way. Don't talk to me that way." [Laughter] And I would say, "Yes, m'am."

R: So she didn't send you back the next summer? [Laughs]

W: Oh, yeah. I spent most of my summers with my grandfather, until I was thirteen. He died when I was thirteen. And I used to spend the summers up there with him and with all the horses and the livestock and the hogs, the Berkshire hogs.

R: Did your grandfather teach you to ride?

W: Well, not really. I guess you could say he started me, yes. He had a pony for me when I first got back there we called Redwings. And Redwings was quite a character. She could outrun anything I ever saw in 50 yards. She was the fastest. She could just fly. And she loved to run, unlike most Shetland ponies. My father had a first cousin named Alex Harmon and Alex would chew tobacco and drink whiskey and bet but he wouldn't work. And I remember one summer, the summer I was seven I guess, he took me with him around to various places in the county and he would match Redwings against other horses for 50 yards.

R: And you were just a small boy.

W: Yeah. And I was riding her bareback. I just didn't want to bother to put on a saddle, and he would match me with these other horses. And Redwings outran anything she met in the 50 yards. Some of the horses were gaining on her awful fast.

R: [Laughs]

W: But that was about as much as she could do. I didn't know anything about what was going on. Well, my father got back there and I told him about Cousin Warick being so nice to me. His name was Warick Harmon. And he got hold of Warick and found that he had made about eighteen hundred dollars on me that summer betting.

R: That's a lot of money.

W: And [chuckles] he made him give me part of the money. I don't know what happened [when] my father got it. Put it in the State National Bank. That started my first bank account. I don't know how much it was, but uh, I know he put it in there. And there was an old lady that lived next to us down there on Magoffin Avenue named Emma Hill and she used to put

something in my bank account each birthday. I don't know how much she gave me or how much my bank account was really but I used to go back and forth on the train by myself.

R: By yourself?

W: Well, my mother went with me for a couple of years, but then she got to feeling kinda badly up there one summer and I can remember taking great long walks hoping that would make her feel better but what she had done was develop a tiny bit of tuberculosis too. So after that I went by myself. They put me on the train and give me a note to show to people as to where I was going and what I was supposed to do. I never did have any problem. I could get to Kansas City. We had a long layover there for some reason - I don't know why - and then we'd get to St. Louis and then we had to change trains in St. Louis and go on up to Stanton, Virginia. That was just thirty-six miles from my grandfather's place. They'd have somebody ... Well, two or three times I caught the, I think it was the B&O from Stanton over to Lexington. I remember it was the longest two hours I'd ever [inaudible] in my life. It was only thirty-six miles and it took the train two hours to make it. They'd meet me in Lexington and I'd be there for the rest of the summer. I spent all the time with the horses and the livestock around on the farm. I was always more interested in the horses than anything else.

R: Well, when did you have your first horse here in El Paso, when you were a young boy?

W: Well, my father always had horses and I just sort of grew up with them. Mother had a picture somewhere - I think it's still around here somewhere. I don't know where it is. - I was about three months old and my father was holding me on the back of Diamond which was one of his old

stallions. I got started riding really, I guess I really got started riding here except that I used to spend the summers up there in Virginia. My first riding recollections go back to Redwings when I was a boy, this pony, and then some of the other horses my grandfather had there. He had a big grey that he called Kit, a big grey mare that I used to ride. There was Beany and Daisy and I don't know, some others.

R: Did you ride Western first or English?

W: Really English. I rode bareback most of the time. I just didn't want to bother to put on a saddle. But my grandfather had an old friend who had served through the Civil War with him named LaSage. LaSage was a colonel of the cavalry in the French Army. He had been just a lieutenant and he was sent over here by the French government. One of the Napoleons, I don't remember which one, to join with the Confederate Cavalry. He had been a lieutenant, a [??] I think they called them, and he was sent over here and joined the Confederate Cavalry and went through the Civil War in the Confederate Cavalry. Well, my grandfather picked up with him. My grandfather picked up with everybody. [Chuckles] They couldn't talk to each other at first. LaSage spoke no English, and my grandfather spoke no French. But they finally got to be friends during the war and went through the war together.

One of the funniest stories I remember was the two of them got cut off from their unit somewhere up there in northern part of Virginia and they were hidden in a dry well. They put their horses in the barn of a house there and went down in the bottom of this well there. That's where they were hidden. And they were down there and they got into a squabble over who would get the last chew of tobacco. That's all they had. And they decided they'd wrestle for it and while they were wrestling for it, the

woman that lived in this farm house where they were came out there and looked down and saw them. And she went back into the house and my grandfather said she came back with a bucket of buttermilk and a great big pan of cornbread and she lowered it down to them. And she kept them fed there for a day or two while they were hidden. And the Yankee troops moved on. And they came out of the well and got their horses and finally joined their own unit. I never did get the true story of how they got back to their own unit.

And after he retired from the French Army, he used to come over. He got to be Chief of Cavalry in France, and after he retired he used to come over to Virginia and spend the summers with my grandfather. They were both in their seventies. And he was one hell of an old taskmaster. He used to just work me to death. And he was a tremendous horseman and a very durable old so-and-so. And I can remember he put me on a big horse. He rarely let me take Redwings, a pony, when I was going with him. He'd put me on another big horse with a saddle and no stirrups.

R: Oh, that hurts.

W: That was the way they trained you in those days and he'd say, "We're going to Staunton" and that was twenty miles. And the old colonel would hit a hard trot and go down the road and I'd come along after him and I'd call to him, "Colonel, Colonel, I'm tired. Let's walk." And he'd say [French accent] "At your age, you no tired. At my age, possible." But he took advantage. They did the same thing in France to some extent from what I understand. But the Virginians were the most incurable visitors in the world. They used to ride around and visit their kinfolks. We'd go to Staunton and we'd stay in Cameron Hall which was an old house which is still there and is still called Cameron Hall and that was twenty miles

over there. And we'd stay there for two or three days with some of the Camerons that were still living in that house. The last I knew was a cousin Ed Cameron. He used to sit on the front porch and talk his head off. Nobody ever saw Ed Cameron do a lick of work in his life and I never could figure out how he lived. But he lived there and finally died there. We'd stay there for two or three days. The Virginians were very adoptable people at that time. If they could get you in a house, they'd put you in a house and you'd sleep there. And if they didn't have room for you in the house, you'd sleep in the barn, in the hay loft. And give you a blanket and you'd go to bed in the hay. And the old colonel didn't mind that. I used to sleep with him in the hay with him at times. We'd get up one morning and he'd say, [French accent] "We go Staunton." Well, that was thirty-something miles from ?Goshen? to Staunton. And we'd go over there and stay with some more of the Cameron clan.

R: You'd make the whole circuit?

W: Yeah. We'd make the whole circuit and then we'd ride back to Lexington. That was another thirty-six miles.

R: And all without stirrups.

W: Yeah. I always enjoyed the trips. I used to fuss about it but I enjoyed it and I enjoyed him. He would talk to me like I was his age. You know so many people talk down to kids, but the old colonel would talk to me like I was his age and I say he was such a terrific taskmaster that uh, I learned an awful lot from him without really realizing that I was learning. I had to be absolutely perfect in my position on the horse, every second. I had to have my legs where they belonged and my hands had to be good and my back had to be straight and I'd get so tired sometimes I'd think I was gonna die. I never did. I didn't die with him anyway.

[Chuckles]

R: I rode for ten years so I, you know. I rode saddle seat equitation. I remember the best instructor I ever had a dressage seat. She used to show hunter jumpers and the first thing she did to get my legs in position, she took my stirrups away from me. I remember posting without stirrups and posting and posting.

W: You can post without stirrups if you just grab with your knees and hold on and that's just part of the reason for taking stirrups away from you, make you use your knees.

R: And it's harder to get thrown from a horse too if you're able to use your knees.

W: That saddle seat position used to be the old days they sat there with their feet stuck way out to the side and their legs only touched the saddle down to the knees. If the horse jumped sideways a little bit you came off on your head.

R: That's right. 'Cause I was originally trained to stick out 'cause I showed Arabians and I was originally taught to stick out but I had a horse that used to shy and so the horse would shy and I would come off and it was getting very embarrassing so my father took me to this instructor and what happened I never want any more equitation classes because my legs were never out but my legs were in more and it was a balanced seat and I was never thrown again in the ring and [laughs].

W: That's the seat the American cavalry used, you know, and when we had 20,000 horses at Ft. Bliss we always kept our horses out there near Ft. Bliss and rode with the cavalry for years. Had a wonderful time with 'em. And I got to be a reserve officer of cavalry and graduated from VMI.

R: So you went to Virginia to school.



W: Oh, yes, I went to the Virginia Military Institute and my son went there too. I graduated in 1931 and he graduated in 1973, and he's a horseman, a professional horseman. In my days at VMI we had horses. The cavalry was still mounted. He didn't have horses in the school there .

End of Side A

R: In the first graduating class?

W: Oh, no no. No. Chris Fox was one of the first graduates. You remember who Chris Fox was?

R: Yes.

W: He was in the first graduating class, I think, from the present El Paso High School building. Well, I came along. I graduated in 1927. That building was built when I was a young boy, and the old high school I think where Chris Fox first started was on Arizona Street there where the Hotel Dieu nursing school is now. I think that it was on Campbell Street.

R: I think that became Morehead Junior High.

W: Yes. It was Morehead Junior High when I first went there. I started at San Jacinto, and then they sent me to Lamar and finally ended up at Morehead Junior High and then El Paso High School.

R: Are you still in contact with people you sent to high school with?

W: Uh, I can't think of many of 'em that are still around. There are a few that I see from time to time. But I was thinking just the other day that there were a lot of young Mexican boys that went up there when I was there and they had come from down in our part of El Paso and I knew them very well and they were my good friends in the El Paso High School and I

made other friends up there. There was a boy named Hayden Wyley, I think his name is, yeah, Hayden Wyley, and his father was a Chief Deputy Sheriff under Chris Fox. And Hayden I understand lives up in New Mexico here, I don't know just where and I guess he's still up there. And there was a Nancy Ezell, incidentally whose father built this house, and Nancy lives from what I understand up on a road here that turns off of Borderland Road. I don't know whether she's still there or not. I haven't looked. I've been threatening to go up there for a number of years, but I haven't yet.

R: So directly after graduating from El Paso High you went to VMI?

W: Yes. I went up there just when I got out. I graduated from El Paso High in 1927 and went right to Lexington to VMI and Joe Brown, who's still around here, went up there with me too. And Joe had a terrible time in high school here and he just went one year to VMI. I went on and spent the full four years there. It was primarily an engineering school, but I took the liberal arts course. I don't know why I didn't take the engineering course but I think calculus is the reason I didn't take an engineering course. [Laughter]

R: That's a good reason. [Laughs]

W: Yeah. My second year. The first two years at VMI when I was there, everybody took the same thing except the languages. You had some choice in your language. Well, I took Spanish primarily because I wanted to improve my Spanish and make it more grammatical and not so much like Magoffin Avenue Spanish. And the last two years I had to take another language. I had a choice between French and German, so I took French of which I learned absolutely nothing. I could read French by the time I finished there, but I couldn't speak a word of it. My Mexican accent got

into it. I'd speak it with a Mexican accent.

R: They probably had a fit, the instructor.

W: During the war we were in Normandy. We had been in this camp about thirty days and it was when we were building up to break out of Normandy and I was out on the road and I ran into a French couple. He was very properly dressed with a little Hamburg hat and a dark coat and striped trousers and patent leather shoes and this woman was all dressed in a black dress and they were just walking up the road. Neither one of them was dressed to be out and doing things like that. I reached in my hip pocket and pulled out my phrase book and started trying to talk to them in French. And this woman laughed and spoke to me in Spanish and says, "Your French accent has a very bad Mexican connection." AND I said, "You're not French, you're Mexican." I could tell from her accent in Spanish. I said, "You're from around Mexico City." And she said, "You know Mexico?" And I said, "Yes. I live in El Paso." And we got to talking there on the street and turned out he was the Count de Couver d'Ally - I never have known how to spell it. - He had two or three big houses around there. This was a big house right near where we were camped at that time.

R: He was probably neutral so he was left alone by the Vichy government.

W: Yes. And they had been there in that big house all the time the Germans occupied France and they got along all right, got by.

R: Probably because, you know, the neutrality.

W: Incidentally one of the funny things that happened to them was that there was a Mexican boy in our outfit who was about half nuts. He was from down in South Texas somewhere and I told him about her. So he went over to see them when he got out of the line. He was slightly wounded and he came back and went over to see them and he was on ... . I never quite

figured out what he was doing ... he may have been AWOL from his outfit, I don't know. But one night he went over there, in the middle of the night, got them out of bed, made them hide in the well. Told them the Germans were coming. He was going to stand over the well and protect them. Well, finally some of our people found out what was going on over there and went over there and got help to pull him off and let the people up out of the well and told them to go back in the house and go to bed.

R: Oh, no!

W: I can't remember what his name was, but I remember he was from down in South Texas somewhere and I think he had grown up on the King Ranch. I talked to him some and it was one of those instances that go on during the war that there is no explanation for, that is absolutely crazy. He was crazy, really.

R: I was going to ask you something. When you graduated from UMI did you decide to go to Law School after that?

W: Yes.

R: Where did you go to Law School?

W: University of Texas.

R: So you wanted to come back to Texas?

W: Well, I thought about going to Washington and Lee. They had a law school there, but I knew that I was coming back to El Paso. I had never wanted to live any place else. I was going into the law practice with my uncle, Maury Kemp here, and he insisted that I go to the University of Texas because I was going to practice law in Texas. [Interruption] The funniest thing that happens to me. My eyes just spurt tears. Look at that. Right there. I have to take my glasses off and wipe 'em. I can't see through 'em. Usually after once or twice it quits, but it hasn't quit yet

this morning. What is it you're particularly interested in about El Paso?

R: Just growing up here, just your life here, practicing law here. How you see the city change.

W: Well, I came back here from Law School in 1935 and started practicing law in El Paso. I'd had a bad eye infection when I was in Law School at the University of Texas and had to pull out of school right at the end of one year and I lost that whole year 'cause they wouldn't give me the exams. After I got my eye cleared up and went back so I'd have to take them the next year, the next spring, and that was just too long. And I went back to school and just took different courses and stayed an extra six months and two summer schools down there. I never did like the Law School very much though.

R: You liked VMI much better?

W: Oh yes. Well I mean, at VMI they were awful tough on the cadet. His movements were absolutely prescribed for twenty-four hours a day, but the faculty had the feeling that they were there to see that the cadet learned. And if you were having problems. I remember I was having problems in calculus and Colonel B. B. Mayo was head of the mathematics department and he came out there and he looked at me and he says, "You don't want to go anywhere Saturday afternoon, do you?" "No, sir." "You don't want to go anywhere Sunday afternoon, do you?" "No, sir." "That's good. 'Cause you're gonna be here in my basement both of those afternoons." And he'd get you down there and work on you for three hours. He had a classroom built down there and he'd have all the people that were having trouble with mathematics down there and he'd work on 'em until they finally got it into their head what calculus was.

R: So he really cared.

W: Oh, yes. If the professors at the University... . Well, at VMI they did everything in the world to help you. If you made it, fine. If you didn't, you were out. My class started with three hundred some-odd people and we graduated one hundred ten. And it was tough. You had to work like hell. But they gave you every assistance you could possibly have if they thought you wanted to learn. At the University of Texas, the first thing that happened the first day I was in Law School the dean stood up there. We had all our classes in one great big auditorium and the dean stood up there and said, "Look at the man on the right of you." I looked over here at this boy. "Look at the man on the left of you." I looked at him. He says, "By Thanksgiving two of you will be gone."

R: Gosh.

W: I was a big mouth smart aleck of course. So I stuck my hand up which was sacrilegious and said, "Judge." They called all the teachers at the University Law School "Judge" for some reason. He said, "What is it?" And I said, "These people have all finished a good deal of college education and if they're going to bust two of 'em out and leave just a third, what's the matter with your faculty? Seems to me you ought to be checking the faculty." So I got off to a very fine start at the University of Texas.

R: Uh oh. [Laughs] They were looking for you!

W: They were looking for me from then on. And really had a rough time 'cause there wasn't a single one of 'em that ever forgot that I was the boy, the guy that said that. And the difference was that at VMI they graduated as many as they could possibly push through. They worked the hell out of 'em and the University of Texas they just kicked out as many as they possibly could.

R: So you really had to work.

W: I certainly had to change my ideas about things and I just never appreciated them very much. There was one man named Stumberg that I remember that was a very fine teacher. There was one man - I never did get in his class, - that was considered favorably by the students. But the rest of them, they were just vaguely there. It was sort of the students against the faculty, the entire faculty.

R: That's hard.

W: Oh, gosh, that's awful.

R: So you were glad to get out of there.

W: I mean that was considered the Harvard way and that's the way they did 'em at Harvard and they were trying the same thing at the University of Texas and I never have been to Harvard and don't know anything about it but they used to, uh ... . The old dean did an awful lot of talking about Harvard. He'd finished at the University of Texas and then he went through three years of law school at Harvard after having finished at Texas, and he was just ... .

R: He was someone who would have liked to have taught at Harvard, but ...

W: He was a super-educated old nut, I thought, really and I never did ... but he taught me Contracts and he was terrible at that 'cause that was the first year. But then later on I got into Corporations and took a case in Corporations under him and he was much better in a much smaller class. I guess he figured we'd been in there. That was my senior year, my last year when I took that class under him and I got to think more of him then than I had when he was in my first year.

R: Did you have to get up to recite cases?

W: Yes. He'd call on you and you'd get up and talk about a case and discuss

what the law was and the judge would argue with you and get other students to argue with you about it and my problem was [smiles] I guess I didn't listen closely enough 'cause I'd usually end up horribly confused about what the law was. When I came back here, I decided I'd be a trial lawyer and that's what I did. I'd try cases. I could handle that. But I couldn't handle writing contracts and deeds and things like that. I couldn't get my mind on them for one thing.

R: Were you a criminal lawyer or civil?

W: No. Well, I tried some criminal cases I was appointed in, yes, but I was not a criminal lawyer. I did civil trial work. Most of it was defensive. We represented insurance companies and the Southern Pacific and people like that. I tried an awful lot of railroad cases.

R: Do you remember your first case?

W: My what?

R: Do you remember your first case?

W: Well, yes, I do. It was in the justice court. It involved about \$100. I remember that case because I was just as nervous as hell and I finally got out what I had to say. And I have a funny old client that was about half nuts and he was suing somebody that hadn't paid him a commission, I think, and it was an awful funny sort of a case.

R: Was it before a jury or before a judge?

W: Oh, just before the justice of the peace. It was Jim Goggin who later came into our firm. He was a cousin of my family on the Kemp side and he came into the firm and the firm was Kemp, Smith, Goggin, and White. And old Mr. Brown came in. He'd been here practicing practically by himself for years, and [then it was] Kemp, Smith, Brown, Goggin, and White, and Mr. Brown died and it got to be Kemp, Smith, Goggin, and White, and then



Jim Goggin died and I don't remember what the name was after that. We kept changing the name over the years.

R: What is the complete title now?

W: Kemp, Smith, Duncan, and Hammond now.

R: What happened to White [laughs]?

W: Well, after I got out they took my name out and left my grandfather's name in there. Kemp. And my uncle's name, 'cause that was the start of the firm. The firm originally was Davis, Bell, and Kemp. There's a Major Davis and Captain Bell, and Private Kemp. Grandfather would never let 'em put Private on the door, he said damned if he was going to be the only Private in the firm, so he never had a door marked "Private" while I was in the firm. Just one of those nutty things that goes on. This boy Jim, what the heck is his name? - He was named the outstanding young man in El Paso here just recently, and he is in that firm now. Larry Wood. He had an office right next to me when I retired. I had done nothing but trial work and then I had a heart attack and then I had another heart attack. They told me I was going to have to quit doing trial work.

R: This was recently?

W: This was back, I had the first one in 1970 and I had another one in '73. No not '70. Wait a minute. Yeah, it was '70. And finally when '80 came around, they retired me, left the firm.

R: So you still are Lawyer Emeritus though.

W: I'm just a guy that lives in the country now. I won't even dress up for anything. I think I'm kind of an embarrassment to them because I never put on a coat and go around and wear a jacket. I always liked cowboy clothes. That's what I always dressed in when I didn't have to go to the courthouse.

R: I think that makes a client probably feel more comfortable.

W: Well, I don't know whether it did or not. I don't think it does. I think your clients normally expect you to be kind of dressed up and presentable when you see 'em. I never did know what clients thought.

R: What were some of the more interesting cases?

W: Oh, there were Southern Pacific cases I tried. One of the most memorable cases I tried I guess was down there in the Lower Valley. The Southern Pacific had some land that they bought way back before the turn of the century I think to put a yard, build a yard there. And they finally started building it, put some tracks in there and there was a little subdivision down there. They all got together to file a law suit against the Southern Pacific to stop them from using that land that they'd bought long before Ramona was thought of. It was way out in the country when it was first bought and the group got together and filed this suit and I tried that. The Southern Pacific was building what they called the ? Area Yard down there and I tried that suit against those Ramona Subdivision people. I tried it twice as a matter of fact. The first time they had a hung jury and then I had to try it again. It took about two weeks each time. We had so many people mixed up in the law suit, 16 or 17 plaintiffs. The Southern Pacific. We won that case and went on and built the yard down there. It is a great big yard now. When they first started this law suit, there were just a few tracks in there.

R: I bet that made you real popular with the residents of the community.  
[Laughs]

W: Well, I don't know. The people that I knew that were in the law suit as plaintiffs trying to stop the development of the yard, they always remained friendly with me. And as a matter of fact couple of 'em moved

into a house down here on Country Club Road. They moved up here later and we stayed, have always been friendly. So I don't think they wanted to kill me. [Laughter] They could have if they wanted to, but they didn't seem to have the desire.

R: Did you ever show horses or race horses or?

W: Yes, I showed horses. I never did race. I played some polo, but I showed horses. Then when my kids came on I taught all of them to ride and they got to showing horses. Here's my last son right here, this little boy. That's Hugh there. This little feller riding over jumps, that's Wyndham, my youngest son.

R: How many children do you have?

W: Four. I had two girls and two boys. There's Edita, my daughter in that top picture. And there's a picture of Anne over there somewhere.

R: Oh, so you're a horse show father.

W: Oh, yes. I didn't get to go to too many horse shows with them because my demands in court kept me there most of the time but my wife hauled kids all over the state of New Mexico and Arizona showing horses over the years. Kids in the car and horses in the trailer behind it. It was always quite a production.

R: Quite a production getting ready. Did you ever, when you were watching your children ride, did you ever give instructions from the ring? Like put your heels down?

W: Well, I'd be out there and I'd coach them on certain jumps and how they ought to take the course and how they ought to make their turns so as to get through the jumps properly and that sort of thing, yes. [Laughs] I remember I was in Santa Fe one time. What was that old feller's name? He was a Western horseman and a very famous one. Trained Arabian horses and

cutting horses, things like that. He was from Deming at that time. He was sitting in the stands and I was standing at the end of the stand because my daughter had just gone in right by there. She was riding down in front of the stands on horse we called Eddie Ardoin. He was an old rancher who gave me Eddie Ardoin's mother and by the time I picked her up, Eddie was by her side and she bred back so I got three horses for the gift of one. I can remember old Eddie Ardoin. I mean I can't think of this old feller's name, and he was sitting there and the fellow sitting next to him said, "I got \$50 says this old horse will win this." And the man that was with him looked at him and said, "Aw, that damn big old horse can't jump." He said, "Yes, he can too and I got \$50 says that he's going to win it." Conversation and finally they made the bet. And Eddie went on in there and he won it. He won everything he ever jumped at Santa Fe. I can remember there was a lot of conversation about it between these two after the time they had gone into the area. I could usually go to Santa Fe with them because that was usually in August and courts were closed in August and I could go then. But I didn't get to go very often.

R: Bet you heard about it.

W: Oh, yeah, there was always a lot of conversation about it. [Laughs] I remember one time they were going up there with a couple of horses and a trailer and Connie was behind with another car. They were driving my truck. It had 700 miles on it, a brand new pick-up truck and a trailer with two horses in it. Men were working on the road and had a great pile of burn they called it down the center of the road and they forced them down the right hand side of the road. The kids didn't want to go over there because it looked too narrow and they argued about it but they had

a typical New Mexico flagman there [that] wouldn't let 'em go, and so were going along and as they were afraid of, the trailer just was a little bit too wide and it slowly went down and pulled the truck off and they turned over and went down into the ditch with the two horses and the trailer.

End of Tape 1, Side B

W: She stopped and then she had a terrible time with this New Mexico road crew up there who were going to get a bulldozer and turn the trailer back up with the horses in it. And then Suzanne Jones from Roswell - she was a good horsewoman and her father had been a cavalry officer I knew very well- she came along with some other kids and got the horses by their tails and pulled them out of the trailer.

R: I bet those horses were so scared.

W: Then they rode them. She put a couple of her kids on the horses and they rode them on into Clines Corners. And when Connie got up there. Well, I mean she had horses and went on to Santa Fe and then came back to Clines Corners and picked up those two horses and trailer and truck went into the shop for repairs in Albuquerque. They fixed it up so they would run and they brought 'em down here and got 'em fixed up finally after that.

R: Your brand new truck![[Laughs]

W: Yeah, my brand new truck. And I remember my daughter Edita, I think she was at Clines Corners, called me on the telephone and said, "Guess what, Daddy." And I said, "What?" And she told me they had turned over, and I got so damn mad I wanted to kill somebody. So I went down to the courthouse and got the judge to put off one of my cases 'cause I wanted

to go to Santa Fe to see that nobody was hurt. By the time I got there they had both of the horses in Santa Fe and they looked to me like they were a little bit sore and beat up, so I scratched them and we stayed there during the show and saw the rest of it and I finally managed to get home. Finally got the trailer and the truck out of Albuquerque and brought them home.

R: Where did you meet your wife? Did you meet her here in El Paso?

W: Yes, she was here. Her father was manager of the smelter. We represented the smelter and I was running around here. I had a fine date with her.

R: So you were already an attorney?

W: Yes. I was practicing law. And they fixed me with a blind date for her for some reason. I think they expected me to dance in the Junior League Follies because I had, two others, and I wouldn't do it that year. I thought I'd had enough exposure of that kind, and my uncle made a comment about it. He didn't think I should do it, so I didn't. Connie was mad as hell at me about it 'cause she had to dance with somebody else and he could probably dance as well as I did but she always said he couldn't. [Chuckles]

R: So you met her on a blind date?

W: Oh, yeah.

R: Did you have a long courtship?

W: Yeah. Five, six months at least. We were married in June and I think that Junior League Follies thing was in the fall. Always said after she met me I just didn't have a chance. She just took after me. She'll deny that of course. We've had quite a time.

R: [Chuckles] You've been married for how long?

W: What?

R: How many years have you been married?

W: We married in 1939. It was 1939, I think the summer, spring of 1939, and then in 1940 I was called in to the Army at Ft. Bliss. I was a reserve officer. I was called into the Army because I spoke Spanish. Strangely enough they didn't have anybody in the Cavalry that could speak Spanish. I knew the General at Ft. Bliss and he ordered me to active duty and I was doing a lot of work in Mexico. There were a big lot of Germans in Mexico, you know, and I worked in Mexico six or eight months and then they sent me to South America.

R: Did you do like intelligence work?

W: Yes. And I went down to Equador in the office of the military attache and I was sent down there because I spoke Spanish. They still didn't have anybody in the army that could speak Spanish so I went down there and rode all over Equador horseback. It was in the spring of 1943 that I came out of Equador and went to Europe. Here for just a short time and went to Europe, North Africa and Europe.

R: Were you on the front lines?

W: No, I was not in the front line, no. I was in Europe in the Corps. We had two or three divisions, you see. I was down there a good deal, in fact behind the front lines because part of my job was to interrogate prisoners of war and try to find out as much as we could about the German units that were after us. It was our experience, if a man was captured and you started to interrogate him immediately, he'd talk to you. You'd give him two or three hours, he'd remember the teaching he'd had that he was to tell you his name, rank, and serial number and that was all you get out of him. I had a chauffeur, a driver name Grotsky, who was a

product of a Russian mother and a German father from Omaha, Nebraska, who spoke both languages very well. He and I would go down and get these prisoners of war as quickly as we could and he would translate for me. I had a bunch of other linguists that they sent to me too and the ones that were native born Frenchmen or native born Europeans were very useful. Most of the educated linguists that we had,... . I had a PhD in German from Harvard. He could hardly get along. Well, I think it's basically that we don't know how to teach languages in the United States. Now get over with the British. We worked right next to the British all the way across Europe. I found that those people who had been educated in languages in England could do a whole lot better than ours could 'cause they had been taught by people that knew how to teach a language. So that somebody could speak it. Now they'd run into words that they didn't understand but they would usually work it out pretty well but they had a better basic ability to talk to people than our educated people. I remember I had an Irish boy who was supposed to be a PhD in German, and he could barely get along talking to Germans. He had a PhD in German from Harvard and all, but he couldn't talk to them nearly as well as Grotzky could because he talked their kind of German really.

R: It's like people who study fifteenth or sixteenth-century Spanish literature, getting a PhD in that but their ability to converse... . Maybe they can read the old documents, but ... .

W: They could read Spanish but when it came to talking, some of these American boys on the street around here, they couldn't talk at all.

R: Oh, yeah. Exactly.

W: I had grown up speaking to these kids, gone to school with 'em.

R: Have you seen a change in ethnic relations in El Paso over the years?



W: Change in the languages?

R: No, in ethnic relations between Anglos and Mexicans?

W: Oh, yes. Uh, when I was in school all of the Mexican kids spoke Spanish to each other. Now I find Mexican kids that can't speak Spanish to anybody. Their families don't teach 'em Spanish. They want 'em to learn English. And I know some of my old friends - they're now gone - but I used to fuss at 'em because their kids didn't speak Spanish. They just didn't teach 'em Spanish. They made them speak English. And then what Spanish some of them did learn was, oh gosh it was worse than mine ever was. It was just terrible Spanish, no grammar, just words sort of thrown together, no tenses. You didn't know whether they were talking about yesterday, today, or tomorrow. They didn't know the difference in ways to use the words. But somehow they could talk to each other.

R: Have you seen a change in terms of say how Anglos as a group and Mexicans as a group, the change in relationships between the two groups? Has it remained pretty much the same over the years or has it changed?

W: Well, I don't think there has been as much melding of the Anglo and the Mexican in El Paso as I had hoped there would be. They both sort of retain sort of their own standards and their own friends. We know a few Mexican friends that are still around that I've known for many years, like the Bermudez family in Juarez. I knew all of the older Bermudezes and I knew the ones that came on that are closer to my age of course and they were a horsey family. They played polo and they had good horses over there and we used to go to Juarez and compete. We could go back and forth without any problem and I mean now if you try to take a horse to Mexico to have a competition over there you'd be two weeks just doing nothing but getting your horse cleared and then after you got your horse

over there, you'd have a hell of a time getting him back because you'd have to spend another two weeks with the American authorities to get your horses over.

R: Oh, that's crazy.

W: It is. I mean they used to come over here, the Bermudez boys with their polo team. The father, then there was Jaime, Oscar, and ... I can't think of the last Bermudez boy's name.

R: Antonio?

W: He was the big one.

R: Antonio. Was it Antonio who was the former mayor of Juarez?

W: No. He was an uncle of these boys. He was a brother of Don Octavio Bermudez. I can't remember. I think his name was Umberto. I'm not sure. But they came over here and played polo every weekend, came over here and played polo at Ft. Bliss and bring their horses over and a truck and trailer, and unload 'em out there at Ft. Bliss and get out there and play with the El Paso team. And we had a lot of fun. There's teams that come down out of New Mexico and play and teams that came over from Arizona. But the Bermudez team was probably the best polo team in this area. The father used to play with his three boys and they were just a terrific polo team. [Chuckles] They were smart because there in Mexico they carried no goal penalties. You know how they rate people to play polo now? They take the two teams and put them together and if one has a rating of eighteen goals all told and the other one has a rating of twenty goals all told, the eighteen goal [team] starts with a two goal...

R: Handicap?

W: Well, they start with a two goal [advantage over] the other team. They

get the two goals to start with and then the other team has to play after that. It's a very complicated sort of an arrangement. I never was rated. I never was much of a polo player as a matter of fact I was more interested in trimming the horses than I was in playing polo.

R: Did you ever go on a fox hunt in Virginia?

W: Yes, I hunted some up there. I didn't have much time to go out, but I went out a few times and I had fun, yes. It depended on the hunt and the country you were in an awful lot and how good your hounds were and how good the master of fox hounds was and I hunted with some hunts where I sort of had a miserable time and I hunted with others where I had an awful lot of fun. I didn't get to hunt nearly as much as I would have liked to. I had an old horse up there that I used to ride that nobody wanted around because he was mean. He'd kick and he'd strike and he'd bite and he'd do everything but he was a wonderful jumper. And I showed him around a good deal up there in horse shows. I think Forty and I won every class we ever showed in. He was called Old Forty because that was the number that was stamped in his hoof. He had the ? brand on his neck which was a very complicated sort of a brand, but they would stamp the number in the foot for the local control and identification. And he was called Old Forty. He was quite a horse.

R: For a jumper I think you need a horse with some spirit.

W: Oh, yeah.

R: Certainly with courage.

W: Well, the big trouble is was that he'd bite you and he'd strike you with his front feet and he'd kick you. He'd do anything on earth to hurt you and you had to be very careful around him and if you rode him in the company of other horses you had to keep him off to one side.

R: Because he didn't like the other horses either.

W: Well, he didn't mind the other horses. It was the other riders that he was after.

R: [Laughs] Oh, no!

W: I was always afraid he was going to break somebody's leg, you know, kicking.

R: Really.

W: He was in many ways a strange animal but he was a tremendous jumper and a very smart horse. That was one of his main troubles. He was just too dern smart. He was not at all overawed by the human being at all. [Laughs] He came in there. He had a Wyoming brand on him and the army bought him someplace in Wyoming and sent him to us because nobody else wanted to fool with him. Kent Lambert was my instructor at that time and I went down and he was standing there looking at the horse and the horse was in the arena by himself. And everybody was sitting on this high fence around the corral.

R: Was this at VMI?

W: Yes. And Kent Lambert looked at him and says, "How do you like him?" "Well, he's not very pretty but he moves beautifully. He seems a little haunchy." So I opened the gate and went in and the horse ran me up on the fence. [Laughter] So I came back and he said, "Well, I hope you like him because he is yours."

R: [Laughs] And you're going, "Oh, no."

W: I had him all the time I was at VMI. I had quite a time with him but I enjoyed him. He was just one hell of a good horse. And once you'd get on him, by and large he was pretty much down to business. But he would still do strange things. If I'd ride him into a horseshow ring, I'd have

to be very careful with him because he'd charge the judge. He'd charge anybody that was on the ground.

R: Well, thank you. I'd like to, you know, come back at another time.

Recording stops here. End of Tape 2.

Interview continues.

March 20, 1985

W: What would you like to talk about this morning?

R: I'd like to talk about your reactions to how El Paso has changed over the years.

W: [Chuckles] Well, what did we talk about the last time. I've forgotten.

R: We talked about your biography, about growing up in the city, about going to Virginia.

W: How El Paso's changed over the years. Let's see. It's gotten a heck of a lot bigger. You can say that. As a matter of fact, I don't like it as well as I did when it was smaller.

R: Why's that?

W: Well, it used to be that we kept our horses out at Ft. Bliss, just south of Ft. Bliss. And I rode out there on that area that's now occupied by houses and I used to ride around under the edge of the mesa there where it comes up to the valley and takes off.

Maid enters.

W: Bueno. Gracias.

Maid: Otra cosa?

W: Do you want anything else?

R: No.

W: The city has grown ten miles out the Carlsbad road it looks to me like. That's the area where I always rode, south of the Carlsbad highway and back up there on the area that's still not occupied. Part of Ft. Bliss and I liked it out there. We had a lot of fun. We had a bunch of hounds at Ft. Bliss. We used to go out and chase the coyotes with the hounds.

R: Like having a western fox hunt.

W: Yeah. Except that that we were in flat saddles. All of the officer people out at Ft. Bliss of course rode flat saddles and I'd always ridden a flat saddle. My father rode a flat saddle and I've never liked stock saddles. They're not very comfortable I don't think.

R: Certainly can't take a jump with them. [Chuckles]

W: No. I broke horses. I got paid for breaking horses and I always rode 'em with a flat saddle because cowboys always say, "Why do you want to ride that damn thing for?" and I would tell 'em, "Well, that big old saddle of yours, I mean this horse has got his mind made up to get me off. He's going to get me off, there's no question about it. I know that." I never wanted to be a bronc rider or a rodeo rider. I said, "If I come off of one of your saddles, the horn digs me in the stomach, the cantle digs me in the back, the swells on the saddle bang my thighs up, and I come off just beat to death before I hit the ground and then I hit the ground! Well this way I just come loose and hit the ground." And I found it was just more satisfactory for me to ride a flat saddle all the time. I wasn't going to rope anything. I could throw a rope but I couldn't catch anything with it.

R: Do you think the people have changed in the area?

W: Oh, yes. The people of El Paso have changed dramatically really, to me. See, early El Paso was settled by lungers, they called 'em. People who came out here with tuberculosis. And they came from all over the United States and they settled down in El Paso. Well, they fell in love with the town primarily I think for one thing, the climate. I don't care what anybody says, I think we have the best climate in the United States. You just watch your weather reports on TV and it'll be sunny and nice down here. You be sitting here looking out the window and hearing about snow storms, tornadoes, and everything on earth, in every other part of the country. Here in El Paso it'll be nice and sunny and sunshiny. And the early people in El Paso came from all over the United States as I said. They came here because of the climate and they got to be a very, sort of close friends. They were not terribly thick with each other, but they were friendly with each other, and you'd have a few close friends but not many. And the early El Paso anglos were one thing, and of course the Mexican population was something entirely different. I grew up on Magoffin Avenue with the Mexicans and I had a great many friends amongst them and I grew up speaking Spanish. I was the only Anglo in my school there at San Jacinto [Spanish pronunciation] they called it. San Jacinto [English pronunciation] we always called it. They moved me out of there in the third grade over to Lamar because I was speaking English with a bad Mexican accent and I didn't mind it. I got along all right. [Chuckles] People seemed to understand what I had to say.

R: Was there any difference in terms of the lungers between people who were considered Yankees and those who were considered Southerners?

W: There was a little difference; it was kind of a good natured difference

though. I used to hear 'em talking. "Aw, you're nothing but a damned old Yankee" and that sort of thing. It was not anything anybody really held against a person but it was there. It was a good natured sort of a thing. I remember hearing the man down on the street saying, " There ain't no way on earth you can understand what I'm talking about, you goddamn old Yankee bastards." There was just a lot of coming back and forth with that. Of course my people were all of Southern extraction and I had sort of grown up... my grandfather was a Virginian and I used to spend my summers with him there. He had a big farm and they used to send me up there hoping I'd learn to speak English and I came back talking like the Negroes on the farm.

R: So they were not very pleased. [Chuckles]

W: Mother was mad about that. But I had a completely Southern outlook from listening to him. He used to talk to me about what he did in the Civil War. He was just a kid when he went in. He was a good horseman and he was in the Cavalry. He rode a horse he called Spot. I can't remember why the horse was named Spot. Must have had a spot somewhere that they hung that name on him. And my grandfather rode him all through the Civil War. He had some rather remarkable experiences with him and I remember he said they made a charge one time and came to a big ditch, deep ditch running off the side of the mountain and all of the other horses went down in the ditch and Spot jumped it. And my grandfather was talking about that. He was out there all by himself, ahead of everybody, and he was really pulling up waiting for the rest of 'em before he ran into the damn Yankees. Damn Yankee was just sort of one word in those days up there. That's just the way he talked about 'em. The people in El Paso came from all over the United States and it was still a feeling between people of



southern extraction and the damn Yankees, as they were called, but it was a good natured sort of an approach to it. I never saw any fights over it.

R: What did people feel about the Mexican Revolution. How did that affect the city, when the fighting was going on?

W: Well, the Mexican Revolution affected El Paso tremendously because there were just thousands and thousands of Mexicans that came over here to get away from the Mexican Revolution. I can remember the stories they used to tell about the Terrazas family, Don Luis Terrazas. That he owned a large part of the state of Chihuahua, one of the richest men up there. He sent his family up to El Paso in twelve Packard automobiles and that they brought out nine million dollars worth of gold. Now that was just talk. I don't know whether there's anything true about that or not and that he came out horseback, that he was a horseman and came out horseback and they weren't going to make him ride in a damned automobile. He came out at Presidio which is the closest place, closest town of any size - it's still not much of a town - closest to Chihuahua. And that he came out horseback. That he'd always been a horseman and be damned if he was going to let anybody run him out of his country in one of those mechanical monsters. My grandfather, Wyndham Kemp, had done a lot of work for the Terrazas family as a lawyer here in El Paso. They owned a lot of property here and I think they still own property here. I don't know. They own property on El Paso Street and there was an old hotel just across West San Antonio Street from the Del Norte Hotel there - I don't remember what the name of it was - and he owned that piece of property. And he owned property north of the hotel and my grandfather had helped him accumulate that property. And the older people that I

grew up around, they were always nice to me. They were nice to kids. And I grew up as a horseman and by the time I was in high school, my ability as a horseman was in demand from these ranchers because I never broke a horse the way the cowboys did. A lot of the ranchers began to realize that was the best way to break 'em. And then after the cavalry was interested in getting better horses and they bought up a great many thoroughbred stallions and loaned them to these ranchers and they put them out on ranches and the ranchers bred to these thoroughbred stallions and they got half-bred horses and then after not too long a period they began to get three-quarter bred and then seven-eighths bred horses and on up until ...

Phone rings

W: You know a thoroughbred horse'll fight you like a demon if you want him to. You can make him fight you. And the cowboys with their rough ways have trouble with them.

R: Arabians are the same way. If you want roughhouse them, they'll roughhouse you just like that.

W: Yeah, well I mean I've seen thoroughbred horses that would just eat you alive if they'd been abused. They got these better horses coming along and the army was buying them for use in their cavalry and artillery regiments and I was interested in that because I was always a horseman and I rode out there at Ft. Bliss an awful lot. My father had good horses. He'd come out here from Virginia and he knew the thoroughbred and knew what the thoroughbred could do and his father had given him two good stallions that he brought with him. He was first at Toyah. Do you

know where it is?

R: I've heard of it.

W: T-O-Y-A-H. It's about twenty miles this side of Pecos. [Chuckles] That's about all you can say about it. It was a division point on the TP [Texas and Pacific Railroad]. My father came here with TP, and the TP sent him to Toyah and he worked there for I always thought it was three years but mother once said it was five. I've never known for sure just how long he was there, but he was there and he got to know the ranchers in that area. And because of the horses he had 'cause he was a doctor.

R: Did he treat a lot of TB patients in El Paso?

W: Did he?

R: Did he?

W: No. He did not. He was primarily a surgeon. That's what he wanted to be. He came out prepared as a surgeon, but he had TB. But in those days they did everything. He treated a lot of TB patients, yes, and treated a lot of things other than surgical cases but he was primarily a surgeon. That's what he wanted to be. When you got into TB it was kind of a highly specialized sort of branch of the medical profession and Dr. Holman - he's the man who built what is now Southwestern General Hospital, Holman Sanatorium originally. He built that late in life, and his son and his brother Ralph, younger brother and his son Bob Holman, converted into a hospital because the treatment of TB fell off after they got penicillin and things like that. From what I understand, TB responds very well to penicillin and they were just shooting people with penicillin and getting them well that way other than sending them to this area for the climatic change. But the people in El Paso, the Anglo population, ... now there was not much going on between the Anglo

population and the Mexicans. They didn't have much contact with each other except a few like me who I had gone to San Jacinto to the third grade and I knew an awful lot of Mexican kids down there and then they sent me over to Lamar. And there were a good many of them over there. And one of the things I remember particularly about being at Lamar School was that a couple of the Mexican kids were sitting under some trees that they had in the corner of the area there and they were having a big argument about which one of them had the whitest stomach. And they had their shirts pulled open and they were comparing their stomachs to see which one of them had the whitest stomach. [Laughter]

R: And of course you had the ... [Laughs]

W: They didn't ask me. There I was, a blonde and I think they knew I had the edge on them. But I can remember this conversation going on and it was a typical conversation between the Mexican kids at that time. It was Spanglish, let's say. It was half Spanish and half English and all of this conversation going on and showing their stomachs and standing up there against each other and everybody asking the other who got the whitest stomach and I got into it. They got me into the discussion on it and I guess I made both of them mad. I don't know. I had a lot of fun with my Mexican friends because Spanglish was just right down my alley. I could understand it and I spoke it too, with them.

R: Was there any sort of, like between the wealthier Mexican population and the Anglo community, was there things like, when you went to high school, was there sort of interethnic dating where Anglos would date Mexicans or was it very separate?

W: It was separate. I don't remember any of that going on really. I was just trying to think the other day about if I knew any of the boys that I

knew, the Anglos, that had any dates with the Mexican girls and I don't think there was any of it really, at that time. I was always friendly with them and there was a certain element of animosity between them, certain of them, but I never had it because I was up on Magoffin Avenue and gone to a Mexican school. I liked them and I'd hear these fellows talking about "Messicans" and there was always a lot of talk about it - not a lot, but some - and I know I used to get into the thing and I'd say, "Oh, you're nuts."

Phone rings

W: And I'd get along with the people and it was always difficult for me to understand the attitude of a lot of my friends and then I worked around on these ranches, too, where some of the Mexican cowboys were. Down south of Sierra Blanca for example, Tom Beall, his father and my grandfather were law partners. And he always thought I kind of belonged to him. And he had sisters and he was the only boy, and Tom never had anything to say. I mean he just didn't talk. I used to be down there with him. He'd talk about horses. He was interested in horses. And I guess he'd talk about cattle 'cause he was a cattle rancher and he knew his cattle. But I didn't know enough about cattle to talk to him and he'd talk about athletics 'cause he'd been a fine athlete in his day. And I remember when Joe Louis was coming on, the boxer, he'd talk at great lengths about Joe Louis. He admired Joe tremendously because Joe was a fantasiac fighter. There's no question about that. But I never could get him to talk about anything else. [Laughs] I remember one day I asked Mother, "Mother, you grew up with old Tom." She says, "Yes." I

said, "Well, why doesn't Tom ever talk?" Says, "You know how his sisters talk?" I says, "Yes." She says, "They talk all the time." I says, "Yes." "His mother was worse. And Tom never had a chance to talk in that family." That was her analysis of Tom Beall and his way of being and it's as good as any I can think of. Tom finally married when I think he was about sixty and had a couple of kids. He and his wife died. Well, his wife died before he did. He lived in Mexico. He had ranches down in Mexico, and he loved ...

R: So his wife was Mexican?

W: Oh, no, no. She was an Anglo.

R: But they lived in ...?

W: They had ranches down just north of Chihuahua and he was the only Anglo or Mexican or Spaniard or anything I ever saw that could communicate with the Tarahumaras. I don't know if he could talk to them or not but he'd get up there and they'd all gather around and there'd be a lot of commotion and I didn't understand any of it. And all of a sudden they'd all start laughing and I think he was communicating with them, I never did know. But he never did talk. I had a terrible time finding out anything from him unless I could work him around and get him to talking about horses or something or athletics and bring in these side issues. With that I could some information out of him about his life in El Paso in the early days on these ranches he had. And I remember we were riding down the river. He had a ranch with Billy Tidwell south of Sierra Blanca, down on the river. It's a terrible area. I never could understand why anybody would want a ranch down there. 'Cause it's awful hard to get around down there, deep canyons that come down and empty into the river. Sort of a bluff there and we were riding around along there

one day and I'd heard a story, and the story I had heard was that Tom and Billy Tidwell and Roddy Love had been mixed up in this. The story was that some Mexicans had raided across the river down there and stolen some of his cattle and that Tom and Billy Tidwell, and Roddy Love went down there and found them camped not far from the river at the foot of a knoll. And that they got up there on the knoll with their rifles and waited until daylight and killed all of them, everybody in the crowd except one young Mexican boy. One of the things that prompted my question was that there was this young Mexican boy working around the ranch down there. He was real young. And I made this statement to Tom. I didn't mention any names about who had done it you know. I just said I heard that three Americans went down there and killed these people and I said, "Do you know anything about that, Mr. Tom?" [Shrugs shoulders] That's all I got. Then we rode another couple of miles down the river and he turned around and looked at me and says, "Wanna see the skel'tons?" I said, "What?" "Want to see the skeletons?"

R: Um.

W: And it finally dawned on me what he was talking about and I says, "Well, yes sir." He just rode into the river and came up on the further side and we were about a mile and a half, two miles down into Mexico and here was a knoll.

R: Oh! Where it actually happened?

W: And here were just bones scattered all over everywhere. And that's all I every got out of him.

R: So you don't know why, what their reasons were or ...?

W: He didn't tell me who they were or ... . He just took me down there and we rode around and I looked at the bones and some of the skulls and then

we went back. And I asked him a few questions and he just [said nothing]. And I don't know. I didn't get anything out of him.

R: Did you hear anything else on the ranch about what had happened?

W: Well, no I didn't 'cause it had happened some time before, you know.

R: Right.

W: AND it was during the time the Mexicans were raiding back and forth across the river down there. And as a matter of fact there wasn't anybody else around the ranch except this young Mexican boy, and Tom, and there were a couple of cowboys down there but they were Mexican and I didn't learn anything else. I didn't ask them because I knew Tom wasn't going to tell me anything. It was a situation that I never did verify anything on. There was no way that I could.

R: You didn't want to strain the friendship or ?

W: No I didn't want to push things too far.

R: No.

W: I always enjoyed being with old Tom 'though he wouldn't talk but he was pleasant company to be around. I never saw him show any emotion of any kind until shortly before he died. He got awful mad at his daughter once, I remember. But he was blind and deaf and she brought him in to see me about something then and I don't know, he got mad at her because she took him out of the house, I think. I just never saw Tom show any emotion of any kind. Just a silent old man that went about his business. I enjoyed being around him and he seemed to kind of enjoy having me around so I made the most of it. I defend him in a law suit brought against him by some commission men who were trying to get fifty cents a head out of him, he and Billy Tidwell, for some steers, some cattle they had sold. They hadn't had anything to do with the selling of the cattle



at all. Tom and Billy Tidwell had sold them themselves, you know, and then I was able to convince the jury in Sierra Blanca whom I figure were going to believe Tom and Billy Tidwell anyway over anybody from Pecos - these commission men were from Pecos - We spend all day down there trying that. And then he stayed ...

End of Tape 3, Side A

W: And Tom and Billy Tidwell, too. And, of course, there was another old feller down there that was a friend of theirs who's kind of a rancher named Neely, old Joe Neely. My greatest recollection of Joe Neely was he had a place right there at the opening of the box canyon, just down below Ft. Hancock. Ft. Quitman I think they call the area. And - I got a picture of it somewhere - Joe was standing there with a half a dozen ribs in his hand, they had had a barbeque, and he was standing there and his face was all greasy and he had these ribs right up in front of his face and he's looking at me and laughing. He was really quite a character too. I enjoyed him very much. And he had a son who worked on the El Paso Sheriff's Department here for a while. He was a deputy sheriff and he'd been a cowboy before he got to be deputy sheriff. He worked for John Helms out here on the old Helms Ranch. It is now owned by this man from Roswell that owns so much land. I can't call his name now. He was head of one of the big oil companies and got to be a very rich man. Bought up most of the land in New Mexico and Texas, but I've never met him. [Editor's Note: Mr. White is speaking of Clinton Anderson]

Among these older people, the friends of my father's were the Lamar Davis family and Charlie Davis. Their father had come out here and I

think they were born in Texas, the Davises, but they came out here and they lived not far from us. They lived on Olive Street. We lived on Magoffin. They were just a street apart there. I think Mrs. Davis, Ora they called her, was a relative, a family connection of ours. I don't know what the connection was. Well, yes I do too. [Chuckles] Her mother was my step-grandmother's sister. My grandmother was a Maury and she came from Tidewater, Virginia too, and she came out here and she died in childbirth when she was very young. And she had two other children that survived, my mother and my uncle Maury Kemp.

R: And her husband remarried?

W: And he remarried later and he married Sally Herndon who was also a Virginian.

R: He met her here?

W: Yes. I think he met her here. He may have known her there in Virginia because she came from Tidewater, too. Everybody ...

R: [Laughs] knew each other?

W: Tidewater, Virginia, was a pretty well-settled area you know, a farming community. After the Civil War there were ... the Yankees burned their homes. There were all these old wrecks. I remember seeing the old Herndon house that belonged to my step-grandmother's family and it had 22 rooms and there was nothing left but the shell, you know. There were, I can remember back there in those days. They took me around to show me, when I was a boy, showed me a lot of the old homes there that had been burned by the Damn Yankees, as they called 'em.

R: They didn't have the money to restore ...?

W: They didn't have anything. I mean they were just completely strapped and they didn't have money to buy seed or anything else. And a lot of that

Tidewater land had been worn out with farming. It used to be in the old days that farms wore out because they didn't have fertilizer, but now you see they replace what the crops take out of the ground with fertilizer. And a lot of those farms are back in production now because they use fertilizer. But a lot of the land I can remember talk about, "Well, that farm all wore out, wore out." That's the way they expressed it. But when I came along most of our relations were with the people who were Southerners. My grandfather came out here and he was rather active in looking after the Confederate veterans because he was awful young. He went into the army when he was fourteen, I think. He had been at the Virginia Military Institute, my grandfather Kemp, and he was in the battle of Newmarket. That's when the cadets at VMI were submitted as a unit in a battle up at Newmarket, which is about sixty miles north of Lexington where VMI is, and they were against old Segal. Segal was a German who'd come over here and been made a general in the Yankee forces, and they met him there at Newmarket, and [Laughs] they ran him clear out of the Shenandoah Valley. There were other Confederate troops in the fight but the VMI corps of cadets were committed down there in the battle as a unit. And it's the only cadet school in the world that was ever committed as a unit in a battle. And that was one of the great prides of VMI and still is, as a matter of fact. May 15 was Newmarket Day and that was always a big day of celebration. There was a lot of standing in ranks and listening to oratory.

R: And you felt proud because your grandfather had ...

W: Oh, yeah, I was part of it. I had gone to VMI afterwards. I spent the summers with my grandfather up there in Lexington and it never occurred to me to go to any other school but VMI. I can remember as a little boy,

they'd ask me what college I wanted to go to and I said, "Well, I want to go to VMI." And I did and my son went. Hugh went. I don't think he had quite the feeling about it that I did but I've always been very proud of the connection with the Virginia Military Institute and proud of the school itself because it is a tremendous school.

R: It's one of the few military institutes that's still an all men's school, isn't it?

W: Yes, I mean they've had some women come up there and look at the school, but they've never had one make application and the reason is [laughs] - it's not hard to understand - because they have no facilities of any kind for women anywhere on the area. I mean, they take 'em down and show 'em the sinks, they call it, in the basement, the shower room. Well, all these old boys down there in the all together, in the showers, and the basement is all toilets and showers. And it's all just one big room, and I think that cools most of the girls off [laughs]. I don't think they're gonna make any changes in VMI because I don't think they want any girls. I remember talking to some of the superintendents about it when I go back to class reunions and things like that. Always I go to Lexington nearly every year simply because that's where my grandfather lived. One of the things. I go back there and I get mad because I look at the freeway. They brought the freeway right down through my grandfather's farm.

R: Oh, no.

W: And just ruined it. The freeway passes right up against the house almost. I look at that and get mad about that. Connie says, "You go up there because you want to get mad at the people that built the freeway." [Laughter] My grandfather's farm had been sold to VMI and after he died, then when they came up there the state of Virginia owned that farm and so

that's where they put the freeway so they wouldn't have to buy any land.

R: They should have made the house a museum or something.

W: Well, the house is still there, but the freeway is right up against the house.

R: Do people still live in the house?

W: Yes, there are still people that live in the house. The last people I saw were a family of Australians. Some Australian had come there. They had built some sort of facility around there that was Australian. I don't know what it was. They had an Australian family over here that lived there in that old house, my grandfather's old house, and the head of the family was head of this Australian company that was running this thing. I think they made cloth or something. I don't know what it was really. I never did ask too much about it. What I asked I think I've forgotten.

R: That's nice that you have such deep roots in really two areas, both in El Paso and also in Virginia.

W: I always enjoyed being on the farm in the summertime, tremendously because my grandfather and grandmother just turned me loose. And the only people who bossed me at all was Horace Scott who was my father's age and a Negro. His mother, Aunt Ellen they called her, had been my grandmother's personal maid before emancipation and she spent her life with my grandmother. My grandmother finally buried her. And she had this big family of Scotts, and the Scotts were people that ran by grandfather's farm. And she was a Cameron. And the Negroes very often adopted the name of the people who owned them and Andrew Cameron who was my great-grandfather had had a whole bunch of daughters, no sons. And he owned a tremendous lot of land in Virginia, and owned a farm just over

the ridge from where my grandfather's farm was. My grandfather's farm had been part of the Cameron farm at one time. And he had all of these girls, and they all married and moved out. I don't know just how many of them they were, except my grandmother used to talk about times and I've been over in the old house. It's still there. Andrew Cameron lived in it. It's called Oak Hill. It's off in kind of a low, sort of a little valley in there, but there's a knoll and the house sits right up on top of this knoll. Great big old frame house and sits up there on top of the knoll. So much of my youth was tied up with Virginia. I just loved it up there in the summertime. The horses, and they just turned me loose, and I got up when I wanted to and went to bed when I wanted to and came in for meals. I was always on time for meals, that was one thing certainly. They had a big meal at noon and then a very light meal at night. That was the Virginia way of doing it. My grandfather and grandmother were always at the noon meal and in evening I was usually by myself in there. They had their evening meal, if they ate any, I don't know, just before they went to bed. But here in El Paso originally we had kind of a big meal in the middle of the day here in El Paso, but they finally changed. Got to where, kind of like now, you just had a snack in the middle of the day and your big meal at night. My step-grandmother, Nana I always called here, was a Virginian and been raised in that tradition. It was sort of ... my life was a mixture of Virginia and El Paso. I loved El Paso. I never wanted to live anywhere else in my life. I never saw a place in the United States that I would trade for El Paso unless maybe Las Cruces. I think I could live in Las Cruces. [Laughter] But not any place else in the United States.

To get back to the people in El Paso that I knew. I can remember some of

the old people here. The lawyers when I first started practicing law that were the leading lawyers in El Paso were old Judge McBroom, come down here from Illinois and had worked ... Indiana, rather. And there was Mr. Bassett who was president of the State National Bank and Mr. Bassett and I were very close friends. He was awful good to me when I was young because of my horse ability. He liked horses and always kept horses and I used to help him with his horses. I was kind of his horse manager at the ranch. I kept what records there were on breeding, I kept for him. He had these good army stallions out there and he'd rent those stallions with these mares. And that was part of my job: to go out there and see that that was taken care of. He had a ranch just north of the old Helms Ranch, in New Mexico, that was run by Frank Bryant. Frank was from Indiana and had been an accountant and he came out here for his health, and Mr. Bassett set him up out there on the ranch. I think Bryant ended up owning half of the ranch and Mr. Bassett owning half, but I spent a lot of time out there on that ranch primarily because of the horses. Mr. Bassett liked the horses; he was crazy about horses and always had horses and Frank Bryant...there was always kind of a running battle between Mr. Bryant and Mr. Bassett over the horses because [laughs] I can remember Mr. Bassett got mad at him one day, said, "Frank, hot damn, I never saw anybody like you. Every time a horse bites off a blade of grass out there on that god damn ranch, it's just like pulling a hair out of your ass. Hurts you all over." [Laughs] "Now Charlie." Mr. Bryant didn't have that much humor about him and he never got mad. Had a very slow way of talking, very precise. "Well, now, Charlie, I don't want all those horses out there." But that is one of the things I remember in particular about Mr. Bassett and Mr. Bryant was Mr. Bassett

getting mad at him that day.

R: Well, what I think we'll do. Do you have any more things that you'd like to say?

W: What were some of your questions?

R: Well, I was going to ask you about, you know we were talking about how El Paso has changed. Do you think people have become more dispersed, that there are not as close as they used to be or?

W: Well, as far as I can see, I don't think they're as close as they used to be when I was growing up. As a matter of fact, I walked from my office to the court house and I knew everybody I met on the street. I can remember speaking to everybody all the way down there. I may not know their name but I knew where they lived and what they did and we always spoke. And then after the war, El Paso started to grow and it just grew all over.

R: What do you think is going to happen to the city?

W: Well, that's an awfully hard question. I think we're going to have to get more, probably have to get more industry in here to keep the city going the way it's going with as many people as we have. It's just an idea. I don't have anything to base it on. It's just what I think.

R: What do you think of the twin plant program?

W: The what?

R: The twin plant program? About having industries on both sides of the border, like RCA and GM and Tonka trucks.

W: Well, to me that's a very good thing for the simple good reason that it gives the people in Mexico something they can tie to because you see when El Paso got to be 100,000 people, Juarez had 35,000 people at the most. It was just a little town and it was supported primarily by, as far as I could see and as far as I knew, supported a great deal by El Paso and



people had all the restaurants. During Prohibition for example, nobody went anywhere to eat except to Juarez. We'd go to the Tivoli. We went every Saturday night to the Tivoli or the Lobby Number 2, both of which were nightclubs. And we'd go over there and get a good meal for 75 cents. Drinks were a quarter and we'd go over there and have a drink and a meal and we'd dance. They all had orchestras, good orchestras. We'd dance and we'd stay there until 10:30 or 11 o'clock and then come home and that was just a regular Saturday night in El Paso. At least it was for us. And we knew all the waiters, and the waiters all knew me. Some of 'em had gone to school on this side. In those days, when I was going to school, some of the El Paso schools were full of kids who came over from Juarez. Nobody thought anything about it. They were just there going to school. We knew them. I can remember when there were Bermudez kids coming over here.

R: You mentioned they played polo with you.

W: Oh, yeah. The Bermudez family. Their father was the captain of the team, and then Jaime and Oscar and Umberto were the other members of the team. And they had a good team and played good polo and they used to come over here and play at Ft. Bliss. The older Bermudezes were good polo players and I think their kids have developed into good polo players. At least the last time I saw them down at Zaragosa and they were playing good polo then. I mean it was ... .

R: Do you think then that Juarez has grown because of El Paso and its growth?

W: I don't know whether it's because of El Paso or not. I don't know why Juarez has grown so tremendously. The thing that keeps coming to my mind is that Mexico just hasn't developed. And I don't see how it can because

so many of the politicians just stole the country blind. So many of the Mexicans that I knew that lived in Juarez didn't have any way to eat really. They didn't have any work. They didn't have any work for them. They were coming over here and work in the Lower Valley and they go back across the river to go home at night. And so they... I guess Juarez grew because of El Paso. That's a guess on my part but I think it was pretty largely because people had come to Juarez because they couldn't make enough to eat on at home. You know, I can remember when Juarez was all Chihuahuenses, they call it, people from the state of Chihuahua. Now they're from all over the Republic. The few times I have talked to Mexicans in Juarez since it began to get big, I didn't understand a lot of it. Couldn't understand what they were talking about.

R: Regional accents?

W: No. You take these people that work for us here, they are from a little village across the river from Fabens against those mountains further down from Fabens really. They were isolated from everything. They were isolated from us by the river and they were isolated from Chihuahua because of the distance. They were isolated from Juarez because if they wanted to go to Juarez, they had to walk. There wasn't any road. They speak a language that I can't understand. Denato and this man that's out there now, the brother - and I can understand the brother better than I can Denato - they speak a brand of Spanish that it's sort of their own. And all down the river. Down at Ojinaga, which is opposite Presidio, those people down there. They did have connections with Chihuahua; they had a road from Ojinaga to Chihuahua. I could understand them better than these El Paso, people between here and Ojinaga. And you get down below Ojinaga into the Big Bend, the Mexicans across the river down there, they

have a Spanish that's different from the Mexicans at Ojinaga for example. They lived up there and didn't have any connection to anybody except the people on this side of the river, and I think that probably goes all the way down as far as maybe Del Rio, I don't know. Or Eagle Pass.

R: People in sort of isolated, rural ...

W: Yeah. They were isolated from everything except this side and down there at Eagle Pass, for example, the Mexicans I ran into in that area I couldn't understand them. Had trouble with it. I didn't have any trouble with these Mexicans up here at all. Cause they were Chihuahuenses, and they spoke the kind of Spanish that I had grown up with. And as I've gotten older I've used the Spanish less and less. I've lost a great deal of it. Maybe I don't understand any of them [laughs], but to get back to the people here that I knew, the Anglo people, as I said, they came from all over the United States. Mr. Bassett and I was as close to him as my father almost because he had the horses and he liked me because I was a horseman and could handle the horses. And I broke a lot of horses for him and trained them and he and I used to ride together at times. Whenever he had time. The big trouble was he usually rode after 4 o'clock in the afternoon and I was practicing law, and I was in the office at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

R: I bet you couldn't wait to get out of the office and go.

W: I used to get up and go out and ride at 5 o'clock in the morning. And I did that up until I retired. I'd get up at 5 o'clock and go out here and work my horses and then go down to the office and stay all day and come home and I'd be beat to death and I wouldn't want to go anywhere. Didn't want to ride in the afternoon because I was just too tired. I mean you get up at 5 o'clock and start then and put in a day and about 8 o'clock,

you're ready for bed.

R: Oh, yeah.

W: But the Lamar Davis family, for example. They were kin to us somehow. They had two boys, Lamar Jr. who was known generally as Junior, and Gates. Just plain Gates, G-A-T-E-S. That was an old family name. And they lived a couple of blocks from us, and I was with them an awful lot. And there was Billy Coles, the Coles family. They came out here originally from Tennessee. There was A.P. Coles and Otis Coles and Frank. Frank was Billy's father, and Billy was older than I was, but Billy and I were great friends.

R: Were you any relation to the Broaddus family?

W: The what?

R: The Broaddus family?

W: Broaddus? No. Uh, I knew of the Broadduses, but lived always north of the tracks. And I lived down there south of the tracks. El Paso was sort of divided.

End of Interview