

Texas City / World War II Oral History Project

Audited Transcript

Interviewee: John G. Wood

Interviewer: Luke Alvey-Henderson

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[00:00]

L: Today is August 1, 2012. I am talking to Mr. John G. Wood and we are doing our interview.

So Mr. Wood, when did you first come to Texas City?

J: I was born in Texas City in 1929. My grandfather and his wife came to Texas City in 1902.

L: So you were born and raised here, so growing up in the area, what school did you go to?

J: Well I first went to Wolvin, then to Danforth, and then both junior and senior high in Central High School.

L: Okay, so when the Japanese first attacked Pearl Harbor, do you remember how you heard about that?

J: Well I was disturbed, I think, but being as old as I am, I don't remember many details. We were living at the old fire station on 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue, because my father was the only paid

fireman at the time. And so we lived above the—on the second story of the fire station. And I remember Mother, I think it was, calling down to me—I must have been in the backyard—saying, “The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor.”

I don't (laughs) recall thinking too much about it at the time.

L: So did anyone you know decide to volunteer and join the war effort?

J: Well my brother did, he graduated—Clarence, graduated in 1942 and in either '42 or '43 he was drafted, but they assigned him to the Navy and he went to Pearl Harbor. He stayed there his tour of duty.

L: Alright, besides that did you have any friends or family members that were in the war effort?

[2:10]

J: Well you're talking about World War II—

L: Yes.

J: —at this point. None of my class, that were most [of my] acquaintances. We were too young for that, at the time. So no, I don't recall others of my immediate family.

L: So your father was the only paid fireman. Did that mean he had special duties that he had to do for the local effort at home, for security and such?

J: Yes he did. He also was the maintenance man for the city hall at the time, so had two functions, one as driver of the fire truck at the fire station. They had two at that time there and one out in West End, so he was involved with the city most of the time both at home and at the city hall where the police station was at that time.

L: So what did he have to do in addition to his normal duties, because of the war effort?

J: Well because of the war effort I'm not quite sure, other than being a part of the city group who did blackouts. You know we had that sort of thing going on. He also, well let's see, 1943 we had a hurricane, and he was involved in the quote rescue efforts of people. But as far as the World War II, he had served in World War I. But as far as World War II, I can't recall specific duties for that particular conflict.

L: You mentioned blackouts. Do you remember what your family would do during the blackouts to pass the time?

[4:05]

J: Well, actually it was in the evenings, of course, and we would cover the windows with blankets and make sure that no light went through. And then, of course, at one time there was a big, tall tower behind the fire station where they had once used it to dry the ropes after a fire. They took it down and put it on top of the city hall and used it as a siren station for that. If there was a problem, the siren would be sounded from that tower. Other things went on such as the cannon, or whatever it was, in front of the city hall, which was a howitzer, was donated to the scrap drive. Those sort of things went on, And—

L: Did you ever do any of that like going door to door for scrap or anything like that with your classes?

J: No. Let's see, '41—I was in junior high, right? Yeah, I went to high school in '44,5,6,7 yeah. I don't think we—of course had food stamps, not food stamps, but just stamps that allowed you to buy certain things. That was one of the things going on at the grocery stores. Some of the people, I think, participated in some sort of activities, watchful activities I guess, but we were quite junior-high young and not called upon to do any specific thing that I can recall.

L: Now with the blackouts, do you remember ever feeling any kind of apprehension or fear that Texas City might actually become a target one day? Was that ever something or did it seem far away from you?

[6:09]

J: Well, we were aware of it, because we were told that be careful about that because German submarines were out in the bay. And that was known, so we were cautious about making sure that light didn't shine. One interesting thing about submarines at that time in the bay, I think a famous phrase came from one of the flights out of Ellington, yeah, I think, which patrolled the Gulf sighted a sub and sank it and their report back was quite simple, and I thought dramatic. It merely said, "Sighted sub. Sank same." I thought that was unique in its brevity and it covered everything.

L: Yeah. So, because of that, you said you were aware of it, did you ever feel fear about it or it's just a sense of apprehension?

J: No, we, I always felt safe. I don't know why that is. And I think the people I associated with felt secure that—of course at one time the Army had stationed some soldiers in Texas City to prevent an invasion of some sort. And I don't know how many at that time. Of course, earlier, in 1913, they had the air base, the military (unintelligible) base out there on the bay on the north side of town. Which was wiped out in 1915, but as far as—I do think there was some assigned soldiers to probably patrol the waterfront and I just felt safe and secure.

L: Good. Did you listen to the radio a lot, during that period?

J: (Laughs.) Yeah, but you know us young folks we were more interested in the programs that like—oh what was that one that was “The Hound of the Baskervilles”? Some of the old radio programs that were kind of scary. I don’t think I listened to the news that much. I’m sure my mother and father did, but that was—I wanted to play.

L: Was “The Shadow” a big one in your house?

J: I beg your pardon?

L: “The Shadow,” was that a big one in your house?

[8:40]

J: Let’s see, it may have been, but I don’t recall “The Shadow.” There’s one I’m trying to remember the name of—it had a swinging door that it opened with creak, creaking door opening, but I can’t even remember the name of that program. And we listened to music a lot, because we were kind of a musical family. Texas City didn’t have a band until 1934 and some salesman came in from Chicago and convinced the powers that be that we needed one, so they bought some band instruments and my dad bought four: the trombone for my older sister, clarinet for my older brother, trumpet for my next brother, and a baritone for me. My younger brother William wasn’t born yet. So we played music and my brother Clarence continues to play in Denton, Texas. My sister’s gone now, my other brother is gone now, so I have two left. But we were musically inclined at that and I stopped playing music in my second year at college, but both my younger brother and my older brother continued to play music.

L: Great. Did you go to movies a lot back then?

[10:18}

J: Oh yeah. Now let me tell you this, it was interesting. I presume, because Dad was the paid fireman and aware of things and took his truck places, I got into the movies for free. Unless I took a date, after—you know, in high school. So I could go to the movies anytime, walk in, and they knew me and—I don’t know who owned The Jewel and Texas Theater. We didn’t have The Showboat at that time. But I could walk in the theater, and just go to it and enjoy, and that’s what I did. Particularly Saturday afternoon, when you’d get there in the afternoon and you’d watch serials and comic things and then the main feature would come on. Later on I did work with my brother Dan at The Showboat doing the popcorn or seating people, so I kept busy.

But the war effort, although my brother did go, didn’t seem—although we were aware and we knew that certain people would not come back, because my mother would tell

us about a certain lady who lost her husband and we were aware of the trauma and the pathos going on with some people, but it didn't affect us directly that I know of. Well, I had a cousin from Giddings, Texas, who went to France and didn't come back. Those things were there. Then of course after the war the Donahues came in and started an airport, and my dad decided to buy an airplane and try it out.

L: Wow. Well you can't do that anymore, just try it out—

J: (Laughs.) No, he started buying it, and just as an aside, we went—this must have been '45, because of—or '46, '45 because my brother had gotten out of the Navy and he had bought an old car. And he took my mother and me and somebody else and my younger brother to Giddings for a family reunion. And Dad flew up in the plane he was buying and taking lessons in, which was okay at that time. Then he came to the thing and then coming home he took my brother Dan with him. That was not appropriate. He wasn't supposed to have a passenger. And we got home and they weren't home and they flew. They should have been home hours before. (Laughs.) Mother called the airport and reported it and oh, they were upset, but Dad and Dan came walking in not too long after that, after having hitchhiked home from Katy, Texas, where he had to land the plane because of fog.

[13:15]

L: Oh, okay. (Laughs.)

J: This must have been '46, I guess. Well, they didn't like that, so I don't—and eventually after 1947 Mother sold the plane, I think. Whatever her interest, but I think they had finished paying for it, so she raffled it off or something.

L: So when you went to the movies do you remember watching the newsreels and how much interest there were in those?

J: Oh yeah. I recall Pathos or Pathus, Pathé News. And yeah, we always paid attention and it was a very good method of getting you attuned to the conflict, because they showed battle scenes, but not as clearly as they do today. There was some censorship of what they were showing, but they covered the world events fairly clearly. But also at the movies they always had a travelogue, I'll call it, where they'd go to Fiji Islands or Australia. And it was kind of like *National Geographic*, going places and seeing things. And that was visual.

They always had a comedy, then the main movie, and I remember two—well one or two that I remember clearly was *How Green Was my Valley* with a lady named Greer Garson. I was in love with her. You know, kids love movie stars. And she also played in *Mrs. Miniver*, which was a wartime movie. So those were part of our life growing up. Movies

about war and also there were some humorous ones too. I don't remember too much of them. I remember the dramatic ones, like *Gone with the Wind*. But that was one of our main pastimes, plus playing tennis. My dad built the first tennis court in Texas City at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue and 5<sup>th</sup> Street, corner there. And they had a tennis club for a while, so we had that going on.

L: Yeah, so when—

J: Going out on the dike was a real pleasure growing up, particularly with my brother Dan. We were kind of close. Just walking and seeing. And along the bay shore he found some arrowheads, which we assumed were Karankawa arrowheads, but I don't know for sure.

L: Did you go fishing there or was it more just walking?

[16:10]

J: It was just walking. We didn't do much fishing. Mother didn't like to cook fish. She didn't like the smell of it. So Dad was a fox hunter and a deer hunter, so I'd go with them fox hunting. That's quite an experience to listen to the dogs howl and chase fox. The idea wasn't to catch the fox, it was just to tree the fox and see which dogs were the most adept [adept] at picking up the scents. And these guys, like my dad, they could tell which dog was barking and call him out by name. It's kind of interesting.

L: Yeah. So when it came to, since you mentioned food that brings to mind with the rationing. Did that affect your family very much or—

J: It didn't hurt us. It just limited the—well, like sugar was in kind of short supply, but Mother did real well. We had five kids and Dad would get some meat every now and then donated by somebody who had slaughtered (laughs)—I'll tell you this story. He had gotten an unborn calf from somebody who had slaughtered a cow and Mother cooked that. It's real veal, you know. I mean it was really veal, it was white. But when he told me it was unborn calf I couldn't stay at the table and eat. I had to leave. I was too sensitive in my concept of food, I guess. But that was—and also Mother would cook brains and eggs, and if I knew it I wouldn't eat them, but I believe I ate them without knowledge.

L: Now was that before the war as well, was that just something she did or—

J: Yes, before and some after or during the war.

L: Okay, yeah. So do you remember anything that they had to do to that were work-arounds. Like foods that you stated eating that you didn't eat before? Sewing clothes or things like that to take care of rationing?

J: Well, let's see, I don't think we suffered, quote, much at all, at our household. Well, first, I don't think we were expecting a whole lot, so we didn't need to be wanting a whole lot. And we ate what I call goulash a lot. It was rice and tomatoes and if you had any ground beef you put that in there, with some peppers and all that, so that was one of the mainstays. And we always raised chickens in the backyard, so weekly there was a chore that was done where you'd catch the chicken, you'd wring its neck, dry it out, and put it in the boiling pot, and pull the feathers, so Sundays was chicken day. And that was during the war as well as before.

[19:19]

L: So I imagine you had a—did you have a vehicle, a car, an automobile, and if so how was gasoline for that?

J: Well. That was rationed severely. Dad had what I'd call a hunting car that he put together from a 1931 or '32 Chevy pickup truck. He built—on top of the pickup bed he put a big slab of wood and put a mattress on that and covered the whole thing with screen and two-by-fours and a canvas top with the roll-down curtains on the side. So we had—what I wouldn't want to drive, a hunting car. And go hunting in that and that was quite an adventure, but other than that we didn't have good transportation. So anytime the church, like we went to First Methodist Church there, sometimes we'd go to Galveston with other people's cars to the beach.

And eventually, after the war, I got a car and was able to take some of the kids to the beach, but during the war and also—speaking of rationing, he had built or had built for him a fifty-five gallon gasoline tank for that hunting car and one time a gasoline car turned over in one of the yards near the plants and he was assigned the task of draining some of it. And he got a fifty-five gallon drum of gasoline that we put in the garage to use as gasoline, so we lucked out on that one for a while anyway, but he didn't have any trouble getting gasoline for the fire truck, of course. That was always available, but personal car—we didn't go very much.

L: So when it comes to school, you say you were in junior high at the beginning?

J: No, at Wolvin in first grade.

L: Okay.

[21:53]

J: And by the way, this is kind of interesting. I lived in the, actually I got to the fire station when I was about one year old. Then when I went to school I was five years old. My first grade. So I take off. Mother said, "It's time. Go to school."

So I go down the back steps out the front and then I went west and then north, I mean west, and she was on the front porch watching me and she said, "No, no, no. Don't go that way."

Because there was another building. A two story brick building at 6<sup>th</sup> Street and 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue. I thought that's where school was, but Wolvin was over to the east of us. So she said, "Go on over to that school." So I walked to school two blocks away, three blocks maybe, and somebody found me there and said, "Okay, you go to Miss Renfro's class," but I think it was kind of interesting that parents were secure, at that time, in their children going where they wanted to alone and I don't think that's possible anymore.

L: When you were in school during the war, do you remember any special programs or special class materials that had to do with it?

J: Well, let's see. I'm trying to remember what grade I was in—so I went to school in 1935. '36, '37, '38, '39, '40, '41—six years later was the beginning of the war, so that'd be in sixth grade, right? Yeah. One, two, three, four five, yeah. Sixth grade. Five, six, seven, eight, nine about eleven years old.

I, uh, at Wolvin—I kind of think—let's see, there was some drives, some scrap metal drives. I do know that was going on and I guess I helped out, but I don't remember. But I don't think that we were caught up, I'll call it, in the processes, being at that age, of the war. We knew about it. We heard about it. Some people died that my mother must have known and we saw it in the movies, but I don't think as a project the school emphasized—other than geography and history, which was important, we didn't have—I can't recall special projects to participate in the war or to learn about it, except the geography where we could tell where battles were. Where was North Africa and all that sort of thing, but nothing that I can recall specific. We may have had, but I don't recall.

[25:03]

L: Do you remember bond rallies or any kind of rallies?

J: Oh yeah, we had bonds, savings bonds and I do remember that, not clearly, but I don't know if we bought any. We were kind of on the edge as far as having enough money to feed the family, I guess, so I don't think Mother and Dad invested too much in the bond market.

L: Do you remember what the rallies were like, if they had entertainment or what they did at them?

J: Let's see. We had some when I worked at the Showboat drugstore, if I'm not mistaken, either after or before the movie started they'd have somebody on the stage talking

about buying bonds and they might even go through and ask people if they wanted a sheet that they could sign up for, but that's really dull in my memory, which isn't very good to start with (unintelligible).

This project that you're on now, it's primarily the World War II area?

L: Yes we have a gap in our, a lot of historical information about what it was like in Texas City during the World War II area, so that's what we're focusing on with this series of interviews.

J: Of course, in Texas City, my brother left, of course, my older brother, and my—when he went to the Navy, so he wouldn't know what was going on. He left right after—he left in 1942, I'm sure, or '43, so he may know of something going on before he was drafted. Let's see—what else was going on. Oh, and my other brother who graduated in '45, he would have known a lot, but he's deceased now. Now my brother William, he was born in '37. He wouldn't know a whole lot, be too young, because he was only five years old.

L: So did you know of any Italian or German families in Texas City and if they had a hard time because of the war?

[27:25]

J: Well, they didn't as far as I know of in school, at least. I'm sure there were German and Italian people, because Texas City was a kind of a port, number one, and an industry that was expanding, definitely expanding during the war, because the plants were—there's Monsanto was built and Union Carbide, then they had a tin smelter, the only one in the Western Hemisphere at the time.

Well, I don't recall any people being subjected to any adverse comments that I know of. I know it wasn't in the school anyway. Now whether some people were badgered outside of school or people who were working at plants, I doubt it very seriously. And we didn't have that, as I recall, didn't have many Oriental people in town at that time, so that wasn't a problem. That was mainly on the west coast and that was a sad event.

L: How about blacks or Hispanics in the city, did they have good relations at the time or were they troubled, or what as far as you know?

J: Well, when you think about, let's talk about—Hispanics were fine. I had class members all through school who were Hispanic. We didn't—there was no prejudice in that. However, when I was going to school we did not go to school with the black students. They had separate schools, so we were separate at that time. So I never did go to school, even through '47, so I don't know when they integrated the schools. It was after

'47. And that was something, in my mind—it wasn't really brought to your attention. It just wasn't something that anybody did.

[29:40]

But I got a haircut one time at the barbershop and they had a little Negro boy who polished the shoes, you know. And I felt sorry for him, because I didn't have any shoes on. I was just barefoot and I wasn't able to pay him anything. And I thought, who else would do this work. And then in town they went to a separate part of the theater, for instance. They might be in the balcony while I was down below. At that time and in my situation and with my class members, we didn't think about the separation. Older people may have and were trying to work towards integration, but in my schooling I can't recall it ever being mentioned as being inappropriate. They had their school. We had our school. And most of the participation in sports was not combined. Or in band. We would go to band meets and everybody was white. Later on, I don't know, was that in the '50s when it changed or the '60s?

L: I'm not sure for Texas City, personally. I need to look that up, but it was not at all during this period, that's true. That it was complete segregation at this point.

J: Well, '41 through '45 is when they signed off everything. Or was it '46? My brother got out in '45, so the war must have ended in '45.

L: Yeah, it was in August that we had the end of the war.

J: Okay, August of '45. Well he got out in '45. I don't know whether it was August or before then. He worked down in the terminal, I think, I mean, down at the waterfront until someone convinced him he ought to go to North Texas and study music. In fact, I know who did that. That was Carl Dean Myers. Mr. Myers used to own a service station at 5<sup>th</sup> Avenue North and close to 6<sup>th</sup> Street. His Regis Meyers, are you going to interview Regis Meyers, also?

[32:08]

L: I don't know if we will or not. We've separated the names out, so I don't know if we'll be getting that or not. I'll check on that.

J: Yes, he lives in Texas City and he graduated the same time I did. He just had got out of the hospital with a messed-up intestine, so—I just got a letter from him today, in fact, but he might remember more because he stayed in Texas City. Of course he was there too at the same time, but he stayed there afterwards. And he may have a better memory than I.

L: So do you remember when it was announced that Germany had surrendered? That was in May of 1945. Do you remember that being a big event for your friends or a lot of excitement about that?

J: As I think, I don't remember—we must have heard it over the radio. I do remember the beginning of the war, '41, very clearly. The Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor December the 7th, 1941. And yes, we heard it over the radio and then it was of course going to the movies. That was part of the Pathé, I think it was something news program. I don't remember dancing in the streets about it, but maybe we weren't organized enough, like a lot of people are now. (Laughs.) In fact, we were all kind of individuals, not group packs. We might have two or three friends that were more special than the others, but, as far as our group was, I don't think there was this pack mentality that some people have nowadays, where you have to be in a gang. Idiots. That's my opinion about gangs, they're all idiots, but that's just me. Let's see, what else? During the war, during the war, gasoline rationing was—there was rationing of other foods, but primarily sugar—well, I don't remember the rest of it. Of course, Mother was doing all that shopping. I just pulled the wagon along from A & P grocery store on 6<sup>th</sup> Street.

[34:34]

L: Do you remember how you got around sugar rationing if you wanted to eat something sweet, if you just changed the recipe or if you just ate less sweets?

J: Well, Mother did cook cookies and I don't whether she—I presume she used sugar. Maybe she was sparing. I don't remember eating pies and cakes and all, but cookies was generally always available, so maybe she limited sugar use for cookies and she had enough for that, but I don't recall. But I did put sugar on my cereal, and that's what I ate most mornings is sugar on cereal, but not a lot, one teaspoon. So that wasn't—in fact, I don't recall suffering, if you want to call it that, from non-availability of foods or anything else.

L: Mm-hm. When we dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima, did you remember hearing about that and what the reaction was?

J: I was amazed. And then the second one, there was Nagasaki. I went to Nagasaki, by the way, when I was in the Navy. We were over there in Japan and the communications officer and the supply officer and I decided to go to Nagasaki and see what it was all like. Of course it had been built up since then. They just had a little wooden monument at the center of the place. But it was interesting in Japan how hilly and mountainous it was, and going on a bus ride through these little towns was quite a—and going around and seeing all the rice paddies and the hills. We would have been in hard straits had we

tried to have invaded Japan. They had mountainous tunnels throughout the land and we would have lost millions of soldiers had we invaded.

L: So with the end of the actual end of the war with Japan surrendering do you remember there being more of a reaction to that than to the German surrender?

J: Yes. Although, of course most of us are Anglos, so the European operation was significant, but we knew about, we were informed and kept abreast of the Pacific theater. One, because my brother was there, but it was kind of equal. I think the bombs were the most significant factor and was unique in world history. Whereas, although the invasion of Normandy and the Calais and all that area of Europe, it was a standard process just expanded. It wasn't a unique activity of the world. That's why, to me, the surrender of Japan was more unique than the conquering of the Germans in Europe.

[37:58]

L: So do you remember how long after that before your brother was able to come home?

J: Well, the bombing happened in, was it '44 or '45?

L: In '45 in August.

J: Oh, it was August '45?

L: Mm-hm.

J: No, they didn't surrender until after Nagasaki. Oh, but that's when they surrendered. That was August '45. Well, he came home not long after that. He was at Pearl Harbor and they didn't need him anymore. They didn't want to pay him anymore. (Laughs.) So I don't know the exact date, but he came home in '45, so it must have been after August.

L: So how old were you then in '45?

J: How what? Old?

L: How old were you in '45 again?

J: Let's see fifteen, because I graduated in '47 and I was seventeen, so '46 I was sixteen. '45 I was fifteen.

L: So would you say, because you mentioned that you didn't feel like you suffered during the war, so how long would you say it took for you to feel like things went back to normal after the war? Was it pretty quick for you all?

J: Oh real quickly I would think, because it didn't take long for rationing to be eliminated, because rationing was required because of the need of the military. So once the military need decreased and also when transportation was available, instead of not being available for bringing up sugar from South America or Brazil, wherever it comes from. I think quickly it turned around. Let's see. I don't recall it specifically, but I think we were back to, I'll call, normal, although I don't think we were abnormal very long. Back to normal was almost immediate, I think.

L: So living in Texas City at that time, do you feel like it might have been somewhat unique of a situation for a city in America during the war? Have you talked to other people who had different experiences?

[40:15]

J: No I haven't and in fact here's a—for instance when the blast came in '47 we didn't talk about it among friends. I didn't talk about it at home. It was a fact. It was over, and we didn't try to renew the pain. And I don't think—although there are a lot of things that went on at that time: My brother was in Danforth when it blew apart and I was out of town luckily. I had gone that morning with four other guys in the Key Club to Macon, Georgia, but anyway— that's a whole different story.

We're talking about World War II phase or area. I was only fifteen and when it was over with, I was awed, I won't say just impressed, I was awed by the tremendous explosion of both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And I think that made the most impression on me and then of course everybody talked about it. Not everybody, but we talked about it at school some, but you became most aware of it in the news and the movie theaters. And they did follow the European operations, but there was nothing of lasting significance about the European operation, although the Battle of the Bulge, where we were losing and finally turned it around, were all significant events. They paled in comparison to Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And that's why that enters my mind, and it stays there, longer than anything else.

L: So did you have anything else that comes right to mind, of what it was like to live in Texas City at that time if you could sum it up in just a few sentences or a word? What was it, what was the feeling of that period for you personally?

J: Well personally, Texas City was a wonderful time in my life. I felt secure, even during the war. I felt safe all the time. I could walk in the streets at night at eleven o'clock. Mother knew where we were and she didn't worry. We didn't have thugs who roamed the streets at night. If they ever did they were quickly eliminated by the police. And there was an atmosphere of confidence that our industries were doing fine. We had full employment. Everybody could get a job. And Texas City therefore was, I think, unique, in

the fact that anybody that came during the war, and even before, had a place to work. And that's so significant. You feel secure if people have employment. That's why we're so insecure now; jobs are not available. But Texas City, to me, was unique in its safety its confidence in itself and its good management. I think we always had good management of our city. So in summary, we were secure and happy.

L: Great, well thank you so much for taking the time to do the interview. I will send you all the information you need to sign and send back to us so that we have the right to put this information online.

J: Sure.

L: And once we finish making a transcript of all this, we'll send you a print version of the transcript as well, so in case there's anything that's an error I've made in the transcript we can go over it together and fix that. So did you have any questions before we close this interview?

[44:27]

J: Yes, what do you call your project?

L: We're just calling it an oral history project. We're doing oral histories and we're getting video wherever possible, but where that's not possible we're doing audio, because oral history, those kind of firsthand accounts, there's just nothing that can replace them.

J: So oral history in this particular phase is primarily about World War II?

L: Correct, because we had a lot of oral history that was done about the Texas City Disaster that was able to be captured. And we have some history books written about the founding of Texas City but a good deal of the break was during the World War II era, so that's the main purpose of this one project.

J: Well actually they celebrated last year as the hundredth anniversary, but it of course it was founded before 1911. It was founded in 1894, became an official name, but it didn't become an official city until 1911. You knew that didn't you?

L: Yes. We got plenty of history lessons when we were doing the centennial. The library produced a history website and so I've looked at that extensively.

J: Well it was interesting to me about early history in Texas City that school was kind of secondary because there weren't any teachers, but they finally started a school in, what was it, 1904 and my father went to it. And then he, quote, graduated when he was fourteen. Not because we had twelve grades, only because they only had up through

the eighth grade in Texas City in 1909, so we always thought that his father pulled him out of school at the eighth grade to send him to work on a farm at Dimebox, Texas. But we found out later that he didn't just pull him out, there was no more school in Texas City after the eighth grade. You had to go to Galveston. So that was kind of interesting in early history.

L: That is. Alright, thank you so much for talking to us today and I'll put your packet of information into the mail

J: Thank you, Luke

L: Thank you.

J: Bye bye.

L: Bye.

[47:01]