

# FORT BEND COUNTY HISTORICAL COMMISSION

## *ORAL HISTORY COMMITTEE*

Interviewee: **David Edward Myers**

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Interviewer: Jane Goodsill

Transcriber: Sylvia Vacek

Comment: Fort Bend County Courthouse, Richmond, Texas.  
Bettygene Coyle participated in the interview.

22 Pages



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*Transcript*

GOODSILL: Today is July 27, 2016 and I am interviewing David Edward Myers for the Fort Bend County Historical Commission Oral History Project. Will you start with your date of birth?

MYERS: 12/17/35, and by accident I was actually born in Houston. They drove in to Houston for the birth, so they had me at the old Baptist Memorial Hospital in downtown, but we didn't live in Houston.

My earliest recollection was living on a ranch before I ever went to the first grade. My father worked on the ranch because Bassett, who owned the ranch, was my grandmother's first cousin. He was a Foster descendant. We had ten acres on the ranch and a house. Before I went to the first grade, I was riding horses. There was a horse called Old Crook. They'd tie him up to the hitching rail, and I would climb up on the rail, get in the saddle, and go ride by myself for as long as I wanted to all day. I would stop by the cook's house and get a biscuit in the morning, and when I got back I would jump off the horse and tie it up. They even let me go on round ups once in a while.

The ranch house was a big house from a little kid's perspective with a dance hall, a band stand, a gigantic kitchen and I don't know how many bedrooms. This is where Bassett Blakely lived and upstairs was a series of little rooms all the way across this screened in porch, where the cowboys would sleep when they came to work the round-up.

I remember they had what they called a dipping vat. They would run the cows through this vat, where they swam for a while to kill all the flies and bugs. Bassett sold part of the ranch to a dentist from Houston, who's name was Wheless. He had four partners, so it was called Cinco Ranch. My father became the foreman of Cinco Ranch, which is the Cinco Ranch Real Estate Development now. I don't recall how many acres it was. I believe Bassett's ranch ran from Katy Gaston Road, where our ten acres were, all the way to Addicks Dam, so he had a lot of property. He inherited the land from the Fosters who had 12,000 acres.

GOODSILL: Tell us that story.

MYERS: The Fosters came from Mississippi in the 1830's. John Foster and Randolph Foster were part of Austin's 300, and they ended up with around 12,000 acres in Fort Bend and Waller Counties.

GOODSILL: Do you know the story on how they got that land, and how did they know Stephen F. Austin?

MYERS: I don't know how they knew him. They came from a little place in Mississippi, near Natchez, called Woodville. John Foster is buried there. They came over here, but I am not sure why or for what. They had started a college in Mississippi and owned a bunch of land in Mississippi, and they ended up here as one the Austin's 300 with all this acreage, part of which became the community of Foster.

Let me back track a little bit, we lived on Cinco Ranch, but when World War II came along, we moved to Houston. My father worked in the shipyards, and I started the first grade in Houston, a school called Sutton Elementary. I have run into one man my entire life that went to that elementary school, and he was in Brenham. I went to the first half of the first grade, and then we moved back to Fulshear to my grandmother Doziers. Their name was Myers also, spelled the same way, so my mother's maiden name was Myers. She used to send her driver's license renewal off, and they would send it back and say, "We asked for your maiden name, dummy."

My grandfather, Charles Martin Myers, was the Methodist preacher in Fulshear. We lived with them, and they put me back in the first grade because I hadn't finished. I rode the school bus from Fulshear to Richmond to go to the first grade. I went to the first grade through the twelfth grade with Dale Dutton, Duncan Salmons, Donnie Hubbard, Mary Frances Morehead, Tommy Sue Morehead and Freddy Morsbach.

GOODSILL: What was the school's name?

MYERS: That is a very good question. I have a picture of the kids and the teacher. It was an old frame building behind the old Richmond High School which is long gone. I went through the 12th grade here.

I remember growing up and hearing that old cliché about kinder, gentler times. Well, this was really a good place to grow up because you couldn't get in trouble. Everybody knew about it the next day. I can remember Matt and I had dates and we were going to Sugar Land...

GOODSILL: Who is Matt?

MYERS: Bettegene Coyle's husband. We were speeding, going to the Palms Theater in Sugar Land. Sheriff Tiny Gaston pulled us over and said, "Where are you boys going in such a hurry?" We said, "We are trying to make the movie." The sheriff said, "Ok, but slow down." That's the kind of place it was.

When we got into high school we would be riding around at one o'clock in the morning, drinking beer and one of the sheriff's deputies would pull us over and say, "You know boys, it is time for you to go home." [both laughing], and we would go home.

The Fosters had a bunch of kids. My grandmother's mother was Randolph Foster's daughter. She married a guy named Sillimore, who died. Then she married David McElwee, and he is buried in the cemetery in Fulshear. They had two kids, my grandmother and my great Aunt Lucille Schultz, who lived out at Foster. I used to spend the summers with her. When I was in high school, I lived with my grandmother here. She didn't have a television. In fact I don't think she got a television until the sixties. When I lived with my great aunt in the summers, it was 350 acres and they grew cotton and had a few cows and a ton of old pecan trees. They would let people pick on shares, and they stacked hay in a stack. They had no electricity, but they had a battery operated radio. She cooked on a wood stove with no hot running water. She could make cinnamon rolls, in that wood stove, that were wonderful.

I have killed and plucked chickens, grabbed a chicken by its feet, put it on a stump, chopped his head off, and dipped it in some boiling water over a fire. Then put it in one of those big cast iron pots so you could pick all the pen feathers off and take it in the house and give it to my great aunt. To take a bath, you would have to boil water on that stove and pour it into a tub. I hunted squirrels. You see squirrels running all over the place now, but back then you went out into the woods and you had to stand very still and slowly go around the tree to shoot a squirrel. You took it back and skinned it, and she cooked it.

Mrs. Rosenbush was the post master at Foster. They lived right on the corner at 362 where the old post office used to be. I think it's some mansion now. We would go to dinner there. I didn't even know who she was, I just went to dinner there. I didn't know she was a relative or a descendant of the Fosters. It was funny that I was the president of the Texas History Club in high school, and I did not know all this stuff.

GOODSILL: I was going to ask if your ancestry was an important thing inside your family.

MYERS: Texas history was important to me but not so much because of my family, but just because I enjoyed it. We would go to the Morton Cemetery and see the people that were buried there that were historic, like Jane Long. But my family never mentioned it. As a matter of fact, I'm not sure how I ended up with C. C. Dyers' Bible. I think my grandmother gave it to me because I was interested in Texas history.

You asked me if my family history was important. Back then, it really wasn't. In fact, only six or eight years ago, I started looking into some of these things. I was very curious because a friend in high school, Dale Dutton, and I used to walk over to his house. Every time I went over there, I would walk by the Dyer Cemetery. I had no idea that my great grandfather was buried in there. So it was surprising to find that out. When I got older, I became more interested.

When we lived in Houston, we used to come out to Dozier's Barbecue when Ed was still alive. We would get our barbecue and go to the Fulshear Cemetery and eat our barbecue because my great, great grandmother on the other side is buried there.

I wasn't interested as a high schooler, it never came up. My grandparents didn't talk about it, parents didn't talk about it. My cousin, Suzanne Boone, got interested in the Rankins, and I was aware of that connection because we are descants of Robert Rankin. He is buried in the State Cemetery in Austin. Randolph Foster is buried somewhere out in Foster, but nobody knows exactly where. Randolph Foster is my great, great grandfather. David McElwee married his daughter, Lucy, my grandmother's mother.

GOODSILL: So let's have their names?

MYERS: Randolph Foster was married to Lucy Ruffin Hunter, who I know very little about other than when she died in 1872.

GOODSILL: Their child was?

MYERS: Lucy Matilda Foster McElwee, according to her gravestone. David McElwee and Lucy are buried in the Fulshear Cemetery.

GOODSILL: They were married to each other.

MYERS: Yes and my grandmother, Matilda also married Clem Dyer Myers. His father was August Myers, the original.

GOODSILL: Do you remember your grandparents, Matilda or Clem?

MYERS: I lived with them most of high school. My parents moved away for a while, and I lived there from about the eighth grade until I graduated. Clem was the County Clerk four times. I used to get my allowance downstairs in this very courthouse when it was really THE courthouse. I used to come in and get my allowance when I was a pre-teen.

GOODSILL: How much was your allowance?

MYERS: Fifty cents. At that time I was about eleven, maybe twelve. That is where the County Clerk's office was.

GOODSILL: Where you intimidated to come and visit?

MYERS: No, I loved to come to the Courthouse. I wasn't intimidated at all. It had a musky smell to it. I guess it was that old, and I also enjoyed seeing the Jaybird Woodpecker monument.

GOODSILL: Your relatives were involved in that feud, well, Bassett was.

MYERS: Not any of the Myers were directly involved with that because they were too young at the time. I cannot find any records where August Myers was involved either, but August Myers had a mercantile store here and Clem had a mercantile store. Bettegene put me onto a book that is in the museum now. The cover is Clem David Myer, my father, and uncle sitting on a hitching rail in front of the store. My grandfather owned the building at the end of Morton Street toward the river, and I think he sold it to Covell. I am not sure the exact address of the store.

GOODSILL: You are telling us about your grandfather, Clem?

MYERS: Yea, and Matilda. They called her Mattie, and she played the organ in the Calvary Episcopal Church for years and years and years. I was an acolyte, and I grew up in that church.

GOODSILL: What did she look like?

MYERS: She was short and kind of stooped over, and my aunt looked just like her. They were both very attractive ladies. She was very gracious, very quiet. When I lived with her, it was so funny that through high school, I never studied much at all. Of course, I was not very motivated; in high school it was girls and baseball.

But then I found out that I wasn't as dumb as I thought I was. I took what is now called the SAT and went off to O. U. (University of Oklahoma). I got accepted to Colorado School of Mines and ended up with some degrees [both laughing]. But in high school I don't think I ever studied.

GOODSILL: What was Matilda's reaction?

MYERS: She was not a disciplinarian. You sort of did the right thing because you didn't want to hurt her feelings. She was that sort of woman that you didn't want to make her sad or anything like that. She never told me what to do or not to do. Growing up in a place like this, nobody got into trouble really, it just didn't happen. At least not the crowd I ran around with.

GOODSILL: How about Clem, what kind of guy was he?

MYERS: When I was in high school, he had retired. He was not working any more, neither one of them worked, and they didn't have a car. So, he would get up every morning and walk to the post office in downtown Richmond from 702 South Seventh Street, which is over by the Thompson Highway. It is right across from Freedman Town, that is what they called it back then. Living there and going across the highway was like two different worlds. Sydney Sanford Store was a black man who had a store on the corner, and I would go over there and sit on the bread box and drink sodas and visit. Sometimes I would wander down the street back into that neighborhood because there was a church back there. There was a woman that sang in the choir that sounded just like Mahalia Jackson. She had a beautiful voice. I would walk down the street and stand outside the church and listen to her. It was just beautiful.

GOODSILL: So did the black people have any kind of reaction to a little white boy wandering through their neighborhood?

MYERS: Well, it was a different time. When I went over to the Sydney Sanford Store, he knew who I was. He was always very nice, and the black kids there were very nice. I remember one of them ended up going to Texas Southern University and getting an accounting degree. We talked about it many years later. But no, there was never any kind of issue. A lot of people here worked on the ranches, like the Moore Ranch. In high school, I dated one of the Moore's daughters, and we would go to the black church on special occasions. The whole family would go. John Moore, Hilmar and all the kids would drag me along with them. They would go to the services on the north side of town. There were never any kind of issues back in the fifties... 54 is when I got out of high school.

GOODSILL: So you don't remember in particular any racial tension?

MYERS: I don't remember any at all. It didn't exist; maybe I was a kid and didn't see some of it.

GOODSILL: So you never described your grandfather, Clem. What kind of man was he?

MYERS: He was pretty quiet, and around the house we never talked very much. Like I said, I used to come here and get my allowance from him.

GOODSILL: How do you think it happened on him becoming County Clerk?

MYERS: I have no idea. In fact, I had some business here, and I came into the new Courthouse to look up some oil and gas leases. I happened to look over on the wall, and they had a list of all the County Clerks. I knew he had been the County Clerk because I got my allowance here, but I didn't realize he was County Clerk five times.

GOODSILL: He must have had some particular skills.

MYERS: I guess he went from being a mercantile store owner to the County Clerk. My mother was the County Treasurer and my uncle, Charles Schultz, who married my great Aunt Lucille, was the County Judge.

GOODSILL: Your people were involved in the county!

MYERS: On my mother's side of the family was Charles Martin Myers. He was born in Buns Station. He is my grandfather on my mother's side. He was a Methodist preacher and a member of the Order of the Cincinnati. It is an old organization that has to do with George Washington. He was a descendant of Robert Rankin.

My grandmother was Ed Dozier's first cousin from Fulshear. There are two sets of Myers around because Charles was married before, and he had three or four kids in Yoakum, Texas, before he married my grandmother. His wife died, and he married Isadora. They called her Icie. That is my mother's mother.

GOODSILL: Do you remember them?

MYERS: My grandfather, Charles Morton, died in 1945, when *Gone With the Wind* came out. We were in the Richmond Theater, watching *Gone with the Wind*, and we got word that he had died driving back from Houston.



He had taken my grandmother, Icie, to see a doctor. As he was driving back to Fulshear, he had a heart attack, ran off the road and died. My grandmother got cancer and lived with my aunt in Houston. She passed away in the early fifties. We lived with them a short while when we moved back from Houston.

GOODSILL: Do you remember them fondly?

MYERS: My grandmother was real sweet, and they lived in a house where they actually had an ice box. An ice box, not a refrigerator.

GOODSILL: Ice box of course, big blocks of ice?

MYERS: They had a big mercantile store in Fulshear, which was torn down years ago. She worked there, and he was the preacher at the Methodist Church. He was kind of stern as I recall. I remember one time picking Chinaberries and throwing them over the house. He happened to be on the other side of the house, and I hit him with the Chinaberries, not knowing it. He came around the house and gave me a 'what for' about that.

GOODSILL: That wouldn't have anything to do with being a Methodist preacher.

MYERS: I remember going to his church as a little kid, and he gave a fire and brimstone service which I thought was very interesting for a Methodist. I guess it was the old school kind of thing. My mother was born in Lexington, Texas, north of Giddings.

GOODSILL: Was he up there doing, preaching work?

MYERS: He was. He preached in Lexington, Wharton, Glen Flora, and Fulshear.

GOODSILL: That had to be hard work.

MYERS: Well, they certainly moved around a bit. I don't remember the McElwee side of the family; they have been dead a long time. August Myers and Florence Dyer were all before my time.

GOODSILL: Those are your great, great grandparents?

MYERS: My father went to the sixth grade here in Richmond, and then he became a cowboy. His name was Clem David Myers, and I think that all he liked was being a cowboy for the Bassett Blakely Ranch. Then he managed the Cinco Ranch as the foreman. He was also a good carpenter. I worked with him a couple of summers. We did some roofing over in Victoria, and we did some work in Sharpstown when I was in high school.

GOODSILL: But your memory is that he liked being a cowboy the best?

MYERS: Oh, yea, no question about that. My mother was a really good cook. I guess that is why I like to cook now.

GOODSILL: Tell us your mother's name?

MYERS: Frankie Bell. They called her Fritz.

GOODSILL: How did she get that name?

MYERS: I have no clue, but nobody called her Frankie, people called her Fritz. She was what I would call pretty talented, she had a lot of skills, and she was a great cook, real smart, and a very pretty woman.

GOODSILL: Smart in what way?

MYERS: She would just do a lot of things. They moved to El Campo for a while when I lived with my grandparents. She worked for a newspaper, she was a bookkeeper, and she was the County Treasurer for one term.

GOODSILL: She was good with numbers.

MYERS: Yes. Then she moved to Houston and managed some apartments.

GOODSILL: How did you mother and father meet?

MYERS: You know, I don't know. That is a very good question because she had two years of college. She went to Southwestern in Georgetown for two years, and he went to the sixth grade, and so how they met, I don't know. It is funny that no one talked about history in the family, and they had so much history. It is kind of odd.

GOODSILL: Why do you think that is?

MYERS: That's a question I would like to know the answer to. It is like my grandparents had so much history but nobody ever mentioned the Fosters. I would go spend the summers out there, and I didn't know anything about John Foster or Randolph Foster or Clement Dyer. One of the Dyers used to come sit on the front porch with my grandfather and visit. I heard Dyer was his name.

GOODSILL: What do you know about August Myers?

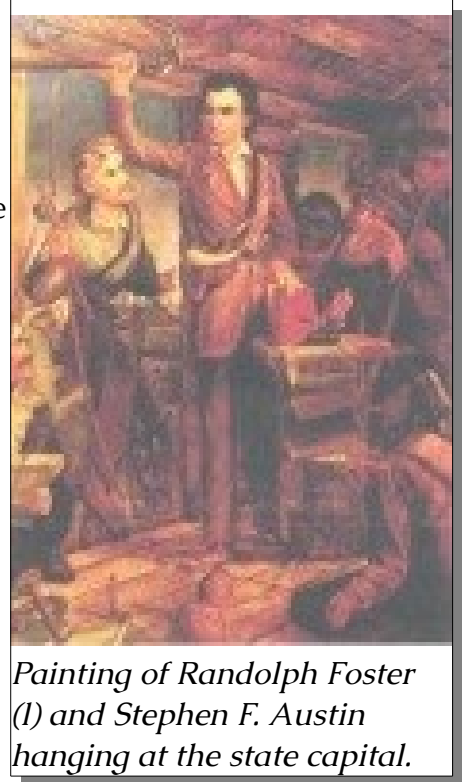
MYERS: The story on August Myers is that when he was nine years old, his family put him on a ship and sent him to the states to avoid the draft from Bremen, Germany. Because back then in Europe, they would put young children in the Army. So he came in at Galveston and somehow worked his way up to Fort Bend County, working as a cowboy, where I think he met the Dyers, and married Florence.

GOODSILL: Florence's father was Clement Dyer?

MYERS: Yes. He had a sister that lived here, but I cannot find any information on her. I have a picture that is on the web that shows August Myers, who interesting enough, looks a great deal like my father. He is with his sister and some other people I could not identify. I have no history about his sister at all. I don't know who she was. It just says this woman with her brothers and one of them is August Myers.

GOODSILL: Tell us about Clement Dyer, his father-in-law?

Painting of Randolph Foster (I) and Stephen F. Austin hanging at the state capital.



*Painting of Randolph Foster (I) and Stephen F. Austin hanging at the state capital.*

MYERS: I know very little about him except that he came over to Texas, and I forget exactly where he came from. I will have to look that up. He was a judge here, and I think they started out around Stafford. Coincidentally he married Sara Stafford. Randolph Foster's father, John Foster came over to Texas as one of Austin's 300, but he went back to Mississippi and died at his daughter's house.

GOODSILL: What do you know about Randolph Foster? Where did he come from?

MYERS: He came from Mississippi with his father. It's a little town out of Natchez called Woodville. He came over with his father, who was a big hunter. He is the one who is in the picture at the State Capital with Stephen F. Austin. He said Stephen F. Austin was a lousy hunter. He made too much noise.

GOODSILL: Perhaps Stephen F. Austin was more of an intellectual than he was a frontiersman.

MYERS: He was more of an administrative type.

GOODSILL: The one good thing I know about Stephen F. Austin is that he was a surveyor, and he surveyed a lot of the land, which is a handy skill to have if you were dividing up land and property.

MYERS: I had the family Bible, which listed a lot of people, some of whom died at a very early age.

GOODSILL: Tell us about that Bible?

MYERS: The date in it is 1826, and at the time they posted all the marriages, deaths and the births. That is how I know my grandfather had a sister, and she married a Winston. I can't think of her first name. She is buried in Morton Cemetery also, and she died when she was 19 or 20 years old.

GOODSILL: How did you get the Bible? Which side of the family do you think it came down from?

MYERS: It came from Clement.

GOODSILL: In the August Myers family?

MYERS: I think my grandmother, Mattie, gave it to me, and I just held on to it for all these years. I was carrying it around every time we moved, and it was starting to break up because it is so old. So, I donated it to the Fort Bend County Museum. The curator didn't seem to think much of it; he thought it was in pretty lousy shape. Well, I said, "It was from 1826!" [both laughing]

GOODSILL: It might be in lousy shape, but it may be valuable.

MYERS: It had a lot of names that I hadn't thought about or knew existed. It is funny that when I graduated from high school, I must have gotten 15 pairs of cuff links. My grandmother and I would be walking down the street and I would say, "Who is that?" She'd say, "That is one of your cousins." It was some lady her age I didn't even know, in a town of three thousand people. I guess we are related to just about everyone around here.

GOODSILL: In the Texas History Club, you didn't learn anything about your family history?

MYERS: No.

GOODSILL: Nothing about Fort Bend County?

MYERS: We learned a bit about who was prominent in Morton Cemetery when we would do our field trip over there and look at all the graves. C. C. Dyer Cemetery existed. I knew it was there, but I did not know what it was. I took my cousin, Dot Myers, who passed away a year or two ago, over there and showed it to her. She didn't even know that it was there. She was the second August Myers' youngest daughter.

GOODSILL: Cinco Ranch. I think of Cinco Ranch as a collection of homes and subdivisions. Is there any ranch land left there at all?

MYERS: I don't think there is any ranch land left at all. The old ranch house of Bassett Blakely is gone. One of the relatives was called Browne Rice. Can't image anyone being called Browne Rice. That was his grandfather, and somebody in his family opened up a beer joint out there called Papa Blakely. I drove out there years ago, and the old ranch house was still there. It doesn't look as big as I remember it as a kid of course, but it is still there. Now it is all a subdivision. From Katy Gaston probably all the way to the Grand Parkway is all housing now, so I don't think there is any ranch land left.

GOODSILL: But when you were growing up, it was all ranch land.

MYERS: It was all ranch land. I still have my father's chaps and spurs. The chaps are about that thick and the reason was that the huisache trees on that place were horrendous.

When they were rounding up cattle, you would hit those huisache thorns, and they were long. I remember riding out there and going through them. I guess houses are on top of them now.



*Huisache, pronounced "wee-satch" or sometimes "we-sach", in a field of bluebonnets near Brenham. The shrub-to-small tree in the Legume family is a native, warm-season perennial that is commonly named "sweet acacia."*

*--Courtesy of the AgriLife Extension Texas A&M System*

When I lived in Fulshear, there was a blacksmith shop there on Main Street, and I used to walk over and watch the guy work. Horseshoes and different stuff, it was definitely ranch land, and supposedly it ran all the way to Addicks Dam. I don't know how many acres he sold, Wheelless and those four other guys. When I was living in Brenham, I would go to the Brenham Country Club. I ran into a guy named Nelms, and it turns out that his father was one of the five that bought Cinco Ranch.

GOODSILL: I can't tell by looking at your family chart. Is your family related to the Blakley's?

MYERS: Yes.

GOODSILL: Do you know what the connection is?

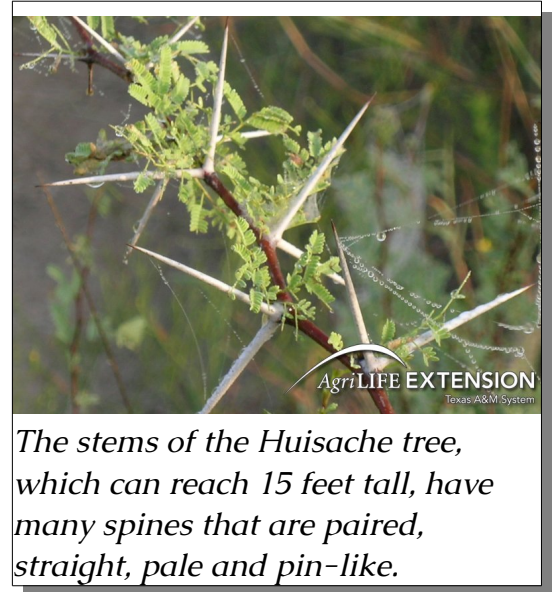
MYERS: Bassett Blakely and my grandmother were first cousins. They were both descendants of the Foster Family. Bassett Blakely's mother was a Foster, and my grandmother's mother was a Foster. So, they were first cousins, which is why my father was working on the ranch. He wanted to be a cowboy and it was a big ranch. I remember the ranch very clearly, riding that horse in the morning. I remember eating in the kitchen, a gigantic long table and a great big kitchen with two or three cooks. Everybody around the ranch would sit and eat at this table.

GOODSILL: What was the food like?

MYERS: You know I don't remember the food.

GOODSILL: You remember those biscuits!

MYERS: Oh, yes. I remember the biscuits really well because one of the cooks lived on the place and I would pull my horse up there, she would come out and hand me a couple of biscuits, and I would ride off. Ride as long as I wanted to and then come back. Someone told me at one time when I was taking an English riding lesson, "You really have a good seat." I said, "I ought to, I have been riding since I was five years old!" [both laughing].



I wanted to bring a picture of me. It was taken at 702 South Seventh Street, at my grandmother's house, and it is me in a night shirt sitting on top of a big horse. But I couldn't get a picture of it. I was a little kid, me in a night shirt, little white shirt, I guess they used to wear that back then, and I am sitting on this monster horse.

Right across the street is this old shack, and this is where Anne's parents built their house years ago. Anne's grandfather came from New Orleans, so they weren't here that many years. He came here a long time ago, I think in the twenties. They have been here a long time, but not back to the 1800's.

EDITOR'S NOTE: See Ann Covell Council and Jeff Council's interview on the FBC Historical Commission Web Site at <https://www.fortbendcountytexas.gov/home/showdocument?id=24336>

GOODSILL: What is your friend Duncan's last name?

MYERS: Salmons. His father was from Florida. He was not from around here, but his mother was from around here, and she was an Andrus, but she was adopted. She is not really a blood relative to any of the people around here. I was trying to think of Ms. Collins; Donnie Hubbard's grandmother has been here quite a while. The other people I grew up with were the Stewarts, Briscoe's, Myers, and the Dyers.

GOODSILL: You just took all this history for granted, that is just who your people were. What were your relatives doing during the Civil War? Do you know?

MYERS: One of the Dyers fought in it. Don't ask me which one. Terry's Rangers, I think. Most of them didn't get involved in it. I think Randolph Foster furnished some game to Sam Houston.

GOODSILL: Do you know if any of your ancestries were involved with the Texas Revolution?

MYERS: No. I think they came after that. Well, the Bible said they came in 1826. I don't know if it started in Mississippi, but Austin's 300 was 1830. C. C. Dyer was already here, and the Fosters had to be here, or they wouldn't have had 12,000 acres.

GOODSILL: The land was distributed before Texas Independence in an attempt to settle the area down?

MYERS: You are right. Randonlay Brindle Foster may have had something to do with Texas Independence; I will have to look that up. When did he die, 1878? So he could have something to do with the Civil War also. I did see a document where one of the Dyers, I think C. C., gave his son a slave, so they did own slaves at least to a small extent back then. I guess that is a politically incorrect subject these days.

GOODSILL: It is, but it is part of history.

MYERS: Yes, it is history.

GOODSILL: Do you want to tell us something about your career?

MYERS: Well, when I graduated from high school, I kind of wavered about where to go off to college, and I got accepted at Texas, O. U., Colorado School of Mines, and ended up going to Wharton Junior College.

GOODSILL: Why?

MYERS: I wanted to play baseball a little bit more, so I went over there, and I got to play a little bit. My claim to fame was to get in a game against Rice Freshmen. I didn't play that much. Then I went to O. U., and I thought I wanted to be a geology major. When I got to O. U., I found out that geology majors were selling life insurance. This would be in '56 or '57, and they couldn't find a job in geology.

I got tired of walking across the campus in the snow, so I came back to Houston, enrolled at U of H, and went to day school. I had Wharton Junior College, and I had two semesters at O. U. I went to school at 8:00 or 8:30 in the morning, and I had a job driving a hot shot truck from 12 to 9 o'clock at night. I did that for a couple of semesters, but the 9 at night started turning into 12 and 1 and 2. I would get ready to walk out at 9, and they would have a delivery to Beaumont, and I would go to Beaumont. I quit going to school for a while and got some pitiful job. Then I met Susan and we got married.

GOODSILL: What is her maiden name?

MYERS: Sengel. Her father was from Fort Smith, Arkansas. His father was in politics in Fort Smith. Anyway, we ended up married with two kids, and I didn't have a degree, so I went back to school. I enrolled in night school at U of H because that was the only option I had at that time. I went to five years of night school and got an accounting degree. For every hour of accounting I got, I could get a little better job and finally graduated and went to work for oil companies doing accounting.



Then in '81, they did the Executive MBA Program at U of H and I went into the controller and said I wanted to go. They sent me, and they paid for it. Back then, it was \$12,000, and now it is \$30,000. So, I got an MBA, then ended up getting my Certified Public Accountant (CPA), and retired from Exxon-Mobil. The last seven years I was a gas trader, so I got away from accounting.

GOODSILL: Do you want to tell us a little bit about gas trading?

MYERS: I loved it. I did day trading first.

GOODSILL: Pretend we know nothing.

MYERS: When they deregulated the markets, all these companies set up marketing arms where they bought and sold, and they would profit off the margins. This would have been '89 through '96. We had four people at a pod. I had a phone in front of me, a button that I could turn off, and an ear plug. We would start at 8:30, and we would stop at 11:00. Every two minutes, I am talking to someone about trading gas. The guy over here was talking about selling. I am mostly buying. So I am buying, and we are talking to each other. If I could buy it for this, and he could sell it for that, then we would do the deal. I would keep doing that all morning, and at eleven you just stopped because the NYMEX (New York Mercantile Exchange) closed. This was day trading.

Then I got transferred to long term, where I called on producers and bought their gas from six months to a year. You had to get a really sharp pencil, and that's where accounting came in real handy. To look at all the trends and the history of the prices of the NYMEX and the forecast, was out six months. You see what you could buy it for and still make a profit. I loved it because you got to call on people and travel around a little bit. I had clients in New Orleans, Miami, Denver, Dallas and of course Houston, so I traveled quite a bit. What I liked about it was that it was so independent. They gave you an expense account, and all they did was look at your numbers. Nobody watched you; all they looked at was what you bought and what the profit was. You would get on a plane, fly to Miami, call on people, go to Joe's Crab Shack and come back.

GOODSILL: The buying and selling days seem to use a lot of adrenaline.

MYERS: What I liked about accounting was the problems and challenges. When those were solved, I got bored. I didn't like all the little nitty gritty. In fact, I was the manager of something called the Methods of Procedures at one point.

It would make you the most unpopular person in the world because you went and looked at somebody else's business and told them how to improve it, like you needed to be doing this instead of within the company. When trading, I had to make quick decisions, and I had to convince a person to sell to me instead of the nine people waiting behind me.

GOODSILL: How did you do that?

MYERS: That is a good question [both laughing]. B. S. I guess. What I did mostly was tell them the truth. I had a guy call me one time that I had known in New Orleans. He was talking to Enron and said that Enron said the market price, this is still on day trading, that morning was \$1.75. I said it was more like a \$1.55. He said, "Really?" I said, "They are not telling you the truth." He started selling me all of his gas.

GOODSILL: Then you went into the long term and that was more analytical than the day trading?

MYERS: Long term was more analytical, and what we did was more NYMEX related. The Henry Hub was the benchmark price, but there is a price with a basis which meant the gas wasn't delivered in Henry Hub, but in South Texas. There was a subtraction from the price at the Henry Hub to deliver it to the pipeline transportation. What I would do is hedge the price and the basis. They would try to guess if the NYMEX was going up or going down.

EDITOR'S NOTE: The Henry Hub is a distribution hub on the natural gas pipeline system in Erath, Louisiana. Due to its importance, it lends its name to the pricing point for natural gas futures contracts traded on the NYMEX and the OTC swaps traded on Intercontinental Exchange (ICE).

GOODSILL: So what happened in this business when the oil industry would go up and down?

MYERS: It was real stable back then. After I got out, it got very voluble. But prices in the '90's through '96 were pretty stable around three dollars. In 2004 and 2005, natural gas prices went up to \$15. There were a lot of little traders all over the place, and they all scattered, faded and disappeared because they could not afford the exposure. Because with \$3 gas versus \$15, the exposure is tremendous, so they were gone. Of course the big outfits could handle it.

GOODSILL: Were you still working for Exxon at the time you were doing the trading?

MYERS: It was Mobil then before they merged actually, it was Mobil.

GOODSILL: So it was a department within an oil and gas company?

MYERS: It was called MNGI, Mobile Natural Gas Inc. We sold all Mobil gas and bought and sold others for the market for profit. I was making them about a million dollars a year, most of the years we were doing fairly well. It was fun.

GOODSILL: So you got out of it because you were ready?

MYERS: I retired. Mobil sold the marketing company to Duke Energy. A friend and I tried to set up our own business, but what we had were relationships with a lot of people to buy from, and Duke at the time did not believe in that. They did not want to get into that, but later on found out that they were wrong. I finally retired in 2001. I worked for the Land Office in Austin.

GOODSILL: What did you do for them?

MYERS: I was the Director of the Royalty Audit. We audited the oil companies, which was kind of interesting. I had been a marketer and also had been an internal auditor for Mobil in Dallas. Anyway, I ended up being the Director of Royalty Audit and worked for David Dewhurst, the land commissioner. I finally retired. I did some litigation support work for some lawyers in Austin for I guess the last couple of years. It turned out one of the attorneys I worked with at the land office was suing oil companies. So, I was on the other side of the fence.

GOODSILL: I wanted to go over and look at some of those maps on the wall so you can orient us where your family property was. Let's go do that.

MYERS: Have you ever heard of Winner Foster Road? They had 350 acres on Winner Foster Road which was behind the old post office. It was the road that ran between Rosenbushes' house and the Post Office. That is the one that goes from Fulshear and runs over to FM 1093.

EDITOR'S NOTE; The Fort Bend County (FBC) Historical Commission Office in the FBC Court House in Richmond houses archives containing documents, photographs, maps, and artifacts that are relevant to the history of Fort Bend County. Of special note are the Knight & White Papers, a group of documents and artifacts dating to early to mid 19th century. Visit the online Historical Commission archive website at <https://www.fortbendcountytexas.gov/government/departments/county-services/historical-commission/archives>

Cinco is down this way towards Fulshear; here is Randolph Foster. Here is Fulshear and Cinco Ranch is down here by Clodine, we called it Clawdine. Here is Gaston, the ranch was here but I think it ran way down here because Cinco was east of Bassett Blakely ranch. This is all Cinco Ranch now; but the ranch started here at Katy Gaston Road, where our house was, right there. The ranch house was somewhere down here, and the old place called Papa Blakely Beer Joint was not too far from the main entrance to the ranch, as I recall.

COYLE: David, when I moved to Richmond, we lived next door to Lottie Winston. I think she was Liddy Laura Blakely Winston and that was where Jane Long's family lived. Did you cross trails with Jane Long's family, too?

MYERS: I have not, but we are definitely kin to the Blakely family. The original August Myers daughter married a Winston. Her name was Lottie, and I want to say that this woman, who died young, was Lottie, and she is buried in Morton Cemetery as a Winston. The tombstone says Lottye but the Bible says Lottie. It is in that Bible. [all laughing]

COYLE: Of course, I am from Rosenberg and David is from Richmond.

GOODSILL: How did you two know each other?

MYERS: We were in high school together.

COYLE: There was a Rosenberg High School and a Richmond High School. I guess in our eighth grade year, they consolidated. It was a long distance phone call. I dated Matt Coyle who lived in Richmond, and it used to cost money for him to call me in Rosenberg.

MYERS: I used to talk to Carol Paul like that because she lived over on Highway 36. We were the first class to go through Lamar Consolidated for four years, ninth through twelfth. I went to school in Richmond until the ninth grade. I went to Jane Long Junior High and in the ninth grade, we would all catch the bus right over there by the old gym and ride over to the high school.



*Matt Coyle in high school. Matt and Bettygene later married.*

COYLE: I was scared about our Rosenberg group going to school with the Richmond people. But it all worked out fine.

MYERS: I don't remember there being much trouble. There were a couple of guys but pretty much we all got along.

COYLE: There may have been some bullies, but we all got along.

GOODSILL: Change is always hard. I think we came up with a pretty good interview. It was fun and it was informative and interesting. I liked hearing your story about your grandparents. I liked the way you described them to us.

COYLE: David, is the house you grew up in still there?

MYERS: No. We sold the house in about 1965 or 1967. I still have a picture of it. It was right across the street from where Anne used to live, and they made it into some kind of boys' home.

COYLE: DePelchin Faith Home.

MYERS: My grandfather owned the entire city block. My parents built a house on one part of it and sold it later on. My grandparents kept the original house until they passed away.

GOODSILL: Did they pass down any property or wealth to anyone?

MYERS: My aunt and my grandmother left me some oil and gas leases.

GOODSILL: Did that come in handy?

MYERS: It did for a while, but not so much anymore.

GOODSILL: Do you still have it?

MYERS: Yes. It's Foster Farms on FM 362. They call it Foster Farms; it is the name of the gas field. Do you know where the old Foster Museum is? It is right there with a fence around it, that's it.

GOODSILL: But it is not producing anymore?

MYERS: A little bit, a drip but not much. It did well for a while.

COYLE: You didn't mention the Stewarts in your interview, did you? Are you kin to them?

MYERS: Yep. They are descendants of Foster, too. The Stewarts, the Briscoe's, Rosenbushes, and I'm sure there are some I don't even know about. As a matter of fact, one of the Fosters married a Wallis, of Wallis, Texas, and that is another trail you can go off on.

GOODSILL: You could spend all your time doing this, couldn't you?

MYERS: There is no way to hide anymore with the internet. You can find anything out. The Rankins are an interesting side, too. I haven't got into that as much, but there was a bunch of them. It could go on and on.

Interview ends