

Interview With

LEWIS RIGLER
Texas Ranger, Retired

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Project:
Texas Rangers

Interview Conducted At The Office Of
Lewis Rigler
Gainesville, Texas
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Longview, Texas

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& Judy Shofner, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum staff.

Present at Interview: Lewis Rigler and Robert Nieman



Introduction

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Lewis Rigler
Texas Ranger, Retired

ROBERT NIEMAN: My name is Robert Nieman; I am assisted by Bill Utsman. Both of us are from Longview, Texas. We are at the office of retired Texas Ranger, Lewis Rigler in Gainesville, Texas. The purpose of this interview is to discuss the Texas Rangers and Ranger Lewis Rigler's career. Ranger Rigler do we have your permission to videotape this interview?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes sir.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ranger Rigler do you understand that this tape will belong to you, the Texas Ranger Museum at Fort Fisher, Waco, Texas and the Americana Research Center?

LEWIS RIGLER: I understand.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And finally Ranger Rigler do we have your permission to present copies of this tape to various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools and etc.?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes sir.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Sir what is your full name?

LEWIS RIGLER: Lewis, L E W I S, Calvin, C A L V I N, the last name Rigler, R I G L E R.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And when and where were you born?

LEWIS RIGLER: I was born in Waco, Texas , 8-7-14.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what is your father and mother's names?

LEWIS RIGLER: My father's name was John W. Rigler. My mother's name was Sally Linville. That was her maiden name.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what is your wife's name?

LEWIS RIGLER: My wife's name is Joyce Tucker, T U C K E R, Rigler.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And do you have any children and what are their names?

LEWIS RIGLER: I have eight children. My oldest child is Steven Rigler, my next child is Michael Rigler, my third child is Eric Rigler, my next child is Linda Hacker, H A C K E R, the fourth child is Charlotte Murrell, M U R R E L L, ah...Patty Mercer is a daughter, Diane Blunt is a daughter and Jan Braselton is a daughter.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mr. Rigler in your book you open some of your early ah....first chapters with a clan.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well in 19...I believe I was in '21 the Klu Klux Klan were real strong in Texas immediately after the war. Of course I was six, seven years, I believe I was seven years old at the time. And I was living with my grandmother about a block from the center of the little town of Lorena. And the Klan had lots of people that belonged, that believed. And a lot of women members in the Klan. And they paraded with their faces covered. And their....they decided they'd have a parade in Lorena. I don't know why, but they decided that one group would meet one mile south of Lorena and one mile on north of Lorena, both on the old highway that was there then, the main north side...ah...north side south highway. And they were going to come down to the center of town and meet at the intersection and turn to what would be to the right, which would be going west and go out through the black section. That was their...their deal. And there was lots of people there. You got to understand then you had a lot of people had horses and buggy's and wagons and saddle horses and old cars you know and I believe Katy run a train out there with a load of people on the train. And along about ten o'clock or eleven o'clock in the morning, whoever owned the water works turned off the water. So they....they also had soda water everywhere. Well, there was a Sheriff of Waco named Bucannon who was anti Klan. And he and Red Burton who was his chief deputy, and Red was later a Ranger, came out there and they met with the Klan and said you can parade but you can't parade with your mask on. It's

against the law. I don't know if it was against the law but that's what was said. I haven't researched that out, I would imagine it was against the law. So they started to parade, then when they got down almost to the place they were to meet, well Red Burton and Bucannon went out to stop them and that's when the shooting and the cutting and everything started. And it severely wounded Bucannon and they killed a man named Crow. He fell off his horse about a block or two down the street close to the railroad track dead. And my uncle, a man named W. F. Linville, was working in a drug store there right where it happened. And Burton managed to drag Bucannon in there and he sort of stood off the crowd there. Nobody broke into the drug store cause Burton let them know if they come in he'd blow 'em away. And my uncle of course was in there, was a witness. And they sent for an ambulance and they took Burton...ah...they took Bucannon out through a coal shoot that was part of the drug store and the general mercantile store and everything was all together. And they had a coal shoot where they put the coal in so they could put it in the stove as I remember. And they took him out through that coal shoot if II wasn't there but that's what my uncle told me and put him in the ambulance. And instead of going through straight up the road back to Waco, which would have been fourteen miles crooked road, they went west to McGregor because the Klan was supposed to have the road blocked. They went to McGregor and then into Waco and put him on the third floor of the hospital at the (unintelligible) hospital. Cause they was afraid somebody would kill him. Well he survived the wounds. And there was a lot of hub bub about it and I think a grand jury indictment and he ran for re-election and got beat. But as a result of that there a man in Waco that's familiar, the names familiar to you, named Pat M. Neff. And Pat M. Neff was elected Governor of Texas. And he was anti Klan. Tom Hickman was living then and...and of course in the Rangers he...he was anti Klan. The Rangers were generally anti Klan. Now the Klan broke up a lot of Masonic lodges

around here. Because basically they probably say, well you don't know what your talking about. But from talking to Tom Hickman and various...some of the Masons joined the Klan. And ah... people being people this caused trouble. And it broke up...I've been told by old timers that saw the effect of this one here, but I have no knowledge of that except hearsay. Tom told it did. But from that point on the Klan declined rather rapidly. Okay?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Pleasure....ah...of you got I believe...got to know Red Burton.

LEWIS RIGLER: Knew Red well.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ya'll ever...what...what influence did....did Red Burton as seven year old child and then as you grew up....

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I was a great admirer of Red Burton. I...I knew Red Burton ah....he was....in his later years he was a member of a big Sunday school class down at Waco. I sort of believe it was a Baptist Church. And he invited me and I accepted and I went down and spoke to his Sunday school class. He was quite a religious man. Ah...he and I never mentioned the...the Klan deal. Never mentioned it. I had...if he'd of brought it up I'd a....he knew that I was there. Because Tom Hickman told him. But ah...he never mentioned it and I never mentioned it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: This happened of course when you were seven.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes

ROBERT NIEMAN: You were going to school in Lorena?

LEWIS RIGLER: Lorena, right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Where did you finish your school up?

LEWIS RIGLER: At Lorena.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Grade school and high school?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did that...seeing those sights when your seven, did that influence...did it have any ah...emotional impact on you?

LEWIS RIGLER: No...no.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...what ah...as you were growing up were you aware of....did...was the Ranger heritage...did you have some feelings as...as a child to be a Texas Ranger?

LEWIS RIGLER: None at all.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What...what did you want to be?

LEWIS RIGLER: When I was growing up?

ROBERT NIEMAN: I mean all's I wanted to do....

LEWIS RIGLER: I grew up during the depression. I just wanted a job where I could make a living. That's all. It didn't make any difference to me if I was going to be a cook or run a service station. Because I grew toin 1929 when the direct depression got so rough that just...just the existence. Well my father died in 1920 and left no estate and ah...left my mother and four children, including me, and we...and I had no desire, no desire at all to enter law enforcement. Never entered my mind. I...I...I would judge that if somebody had come along and said, you want to be a policeman, I'd of said yes if it's going to make a living you know. Do you want to be a pharmacists, yes if it's going to make a living. That was my way of looking at it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When did you graduate from high school?

LEWIS RIGLER: '31.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...when did you go into...you left Lorena and went into the service?

LEWIS RIGLER: I left Lorena in April of 1933 and joined a civilian conservation corp. There's some pictures of that ah...group taken at Fort Davis State Park. I was a member of Company 881. And ah...Roosevelt put that thing together and I drew \$5.00 a month and my

mother drew \$25.00 a month. And that's where I went in April 1933. Now in ah...then we stayed there awhile and we started building a lodge which is still there, a very popular place. And then they transferred one company, there was two companies in there, and they transferred our company to ah...Roswell, New Mexico to the Bottomless Lake State Park. And we were there and then they had the rule you had to be discharged and they discharged me in...in 19...in June of 1934. In 1934 I had an uncle who lived in Oklahoma City and I had written him a letter and so I went to Oklahoma City and the only job he could get me was trying to sell Leonard refrigerators, Hoover vacuum cleaners, Easy washers for Oklahoma Tire and Supply Company. And it was a hard job. And I couldn't make a living. No way. He gave me \$3.00 a week to eat on and ride the bus to town. Then in 1934 I saw I couldn't make it and in ...about the 18th of December I left there and I had...he was gone, my aunt and their family had gone somewhere. And I had a aunt that came in there and was staying with them for a few days. And the morning I left she gave me fifty cents. And I hitch hiked, I come through here in December of 1934 across the bridge over there close to a bank. And I remember crossing that bridge because there was freight train going and I hitch hiked on to Dallas and I caught a ride coming out of Oklahoma City all down to Ardmore and then I caught another ride to Gainesville and then I caught another ride to Dallas. And the first money I spent was I paid seven cents to ride the street car through Dallas. And then I got out the other side of Dallas close to the old Veterans Hospital and caught a....that was Lancaster...and caught a ride from there to Hillsboro and it was about dark and a man came along with a load of gasoline he'd got over at some refinery in East Texas. And he had a service station in Hillsboro and it was about dark and he...he...befriended me and took me to his home and I spent the night and he fixed me something to eat and fixed my breakfast, his wife was gone. And I went on and got to Waco the next day about 11:00 and I still had forty-three cents

out of the fifty cents I left. And I worked on a farm and ah...around first one thing and then another. And in ah...on August 22, 1937 I was trying to get into the Navy. I'd go up to the old post office and go in and talk to the people. And the guy said, well fellow, he said I'll ya', said there's 24 ahead of you and we're taking four a month. And he said, somebody may fail the physical. But said, you're looking at least six months if nobody fails the physical. So I went a couple more times and nobody failed the physical. And I started out and there was an Army Sergeant sittin' there and he said, hey buddy, you want to join the service. And I said, well I was thinking about getting in the Navy. He said, you join the Army, said, I can get you in today. And I said, I...I'm ready. So he give me a piece of paper even though I was past 18 and told me I had to get my mother's signature. And so I caught a ride out to Lorena, got her signature, she didn't much want to sign, but she signed it. I got back up there about 3:00 and he gave me a meal ticket at the Railroad Cafe and I caught the train and went to San Antonio on August 22, 1935. And I was in Fort Sam Houston in the 15th Field Artillery, Battery A, 15th Field Artillery until August 22, 1938 because they wouldn't discharge you on Sunday. So I stayed three years and one day. In...in ah...September of '37 while on furlough I met a nurse in Dallas. And ah...I'd went up there to see a friend of mine on furlough and I met a nurse in Dallas and about six, seven months after we met we got married on September 7, 1937. And she...and we decided I'd get out and try to make a living in the world. So I took my discharge and came to Dallas. Jobs weren't very much. But...so I decided I'd go to college. And in 1939 we went to A & M and I enrolled in Texas A & M. She worked as a nurse and I worked as an orderly. Nurses were being paid \$80.00 a month and an orderly was getting thirty cents an hour. And I went to work , we got down there and she was pregnant went...about the time we got there and we had one child born in 1940, Steven. And I continued on to another year and then I ran out of money after two years. And I saw in the

paper that they was going to have to hire some highway patrolmen. Leo Daniels had cut the highway patrol force from 150 to I believe to 115. And he'd cut the salary from \$150.00 to \$115.00 and that was about the way it was. And ah...they come along and I...I believe Coke Stevenson was the Governor, if it wasn't Coke Stevenson it was Jimmie Allred. And...it was probably was Jimmie Allred...yeah...yes it was I believe Jimmie Allred I'm almost sure of that. Anyway, I made an application and ah...I...they gave a test and...and it's fortunate they asked things like arithmetic and current events and history and ...I...I was pretty good at it. And so I was one of the ones and I entered the Department of Public Safety on September 1, 1941 thinking I was going to be a State Trooper . They called them Highway Patrolmen then. There was 92 people brought there and we was at old Camp Mabry . They started out paying us \$100.00 a month and our meals. We were there almost two months and they announced 73 of the 92 were going to be driver's license examiners. They'd redone the driver's license law. So I wound up in the driver's license. And they asked where we wanted to be stationed and I said Dallas and fortunately that's where they sent me. Well I'd had all the patrol training and the war came on in and ah...in '41 and in May of '42 they transferred me to Grand Prairie on the Highway Patrol. And I was there and that's where I got acquainted with Bob Crowder and Ernest Daniel and ah...Captain Gonzauillas and a bunch of those people. And Gonzauillas looked at me and he said, you know you'd make a hell of an undercover man. Said, you don't look like an officer. And I said, well I don't know. He said, ah...would you like to do a little undercover work. And I said, yeah I'll do it. And so I'd go do undercover work at gambling places and things like that. And he liked the way I got along and ah...so in 19...on September 1st I officially was declared a Ranger but I didn't swear in because that was on a holiday, the first day of

September that year was Labor Day I believe, on a Monday. And on the 2nd Gonzauillas and I and Banks went to Austin where Banks and I were swear in.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Jay Banks.

LEWIS RIGLER: Jay Banks. He was stationed at Denton as a patrolman. And also on that day a friend of mine who I was in school with by the name of Arthur Hill was sworn in. And he went to Alpine, I...I went to...came to Gainesville, Banks went to Graham. Ah..when we were going to Austin Banks had more time than me and didn't want to go to Graham. But I figured he'd get what he wanted because of seniority. So Gonzauillas on the way down there when we got almost to Hillsboro he said, well I've been thinking about you guys. He said ah...one of ya's going to Graham and one of em' s going to Gainesville. And I said, well Banks got seniority on me so take your choice. Well thank God he took Graham. And I didn't want Graham, nothing against it, I just wanted Gainesville. Because of it's proximity to Dallas and Ft. Worth. Well, Banks went to Graham, he didn't like Graham. Not a damn bit and he started trying to transferred to Dallas and he finally I think after a year or two he got transferred to Dallas where he stayed until he left. But ah...I came to Gainesville ah...I was stationed here on September 1, 1947. But I didn't get a car on along until the last of October. And I bought a house and we moved here right about November 1, 1947. And I retired here on August 31, 1977.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Lewis what was your wife's name?

LEWIS RIGLER: My first wife's name was Leah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You said you did some undercover work for Gonzauillas. Ah...one of the famous episodes of Gonzauillas' life was a big raid on a big gambling establishment.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah I was....I was...I did undercover work there. It didn't ever show officially, because never did give them any name in the undercover. I did undercover work there and I also participated not in the raid but taking things, the next day we seized all the equipment.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well where was this at and could you give us a background and a story on that.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well the Top of the Hill Club was over there close to Arlington, sat on top of a hill. And I can't think of the man's name that had it for a long time. Made a lot of money but he was horse gambler. He loved horses. And he bet on horses. And this was a top drawer gambling thing. Ah...ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: I failed to turn that thing on...just a second.

LEWIS RIGLER: Ah...he was...he was...it was a beautiful gambling place. And you went in and you went down in the basement in the bottom and it had a steel door. And it had escape routes out in this hill where they could ...if you got raided the people could go out these escape tunnels. And ah...when ever you went down into that thing, if somebody came they could snap that steel door shut. Well there was a Ranger named Nailer who also was there and he put him inside that night. And Nailer keep em' from banging the door closed.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How often did you go there...ah you worked as an agent there...undercover agent there...

LEWIS RIGLER: Undercover....two or three times.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah...how did you infiltrate or what did you do.

LEWIS RIGLER: Wasn't no problem.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Just walked in the door?

LEWIS RIGLER: Just walked in, had some flash money you know. And also I knew a guy that was going there and he took me in to tell you the truth.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And then what was the results of the raid?

LEWIS RIGLER: I don't remember. I don't think there was anything ah...I don't think there was anything outstanding ever happened. That finished The Top of the Hill. It never operated anymore. And Gonzauillas was real anxious to close that thing down. Because that was one of the reasons Tom Hickman was asked to leave the Ranger service about 1935 by Jimmie Allred.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I wanted to ask you why...about why Hickman was asked to leave.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, that was what I've been told. Now Hickman never told me that, he told me how much he hated Jimmie Allred.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, I want to discuss Tom Hickman at length maybe and just a little bit later....

LEWIS RIGLER: all right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...let's go ahead and...you first got into ah...tell us ah...I think I remember in a letter maybe you wrote to...to...Ranger Glenn Elliott, that Glenn showed me, I have a copy here. That ah...you got to you were working across the office or hall or something from Gonzauillas.....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well the old Ranger building in Fair Park was made out of logs. And it was something like a fort would be maybe. Well when you entered that thing the Ranger deal was on the right and there was a hallway there, from here over there and it had some benches there. And when you entered...when you came up on that place, that was opening...if you wanted to go into the Ranger place you went in the door on the right and if you wanted to go to the driver's place you went in the door on the left. And then if you wanted to go to the Highway Patrol you took a

little walk around there and it was down on the left too. And then there was a horse stable out there and there was some living quarters back there. Sort of like you see in the movies.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And you got to know Gonzauillas....

LEWIS RIGLER: I got there and I got acquainted with Ernest first, Earnest Daniel who just died, dear friend of mine for many, many years. And he...he and...then he got me acquainted with Bob Crowder and both of them were dear friends and...and worked with them through the years. And they got to talk to Gonzauillas and then Gonzauillas got acquainted with me. And got in some trouble four or five times out at the Grand Prairie, it was pretty rough there. And we had North American Aviation out there and had a hell of a lot of traffic. And some people complained that I had been fighting them and whipping them and doing these things and Colonel Garrison finally called Gonzauillas and said, we got a man out at Grand Prairie that I'm getting about a letter a month on him about being a mean son-of-a-bitch. And they...so Gonzauillas investigated. And Gonzauillas decided it was a bunch of crap. He didn't....he didn't...so Colonel Garrison said, well (unintelligible) you, Gonzauillas is going to protect, but that's the way it was. And ah...I really wasn't all that mean, but they made up their mind they was going to make me leave Grand Prairie and I made up my mind they wasn't. And so Gonzauillas like me, or liked the way I worked and like me as an individual. And in those days most of the time you got to be a Ranger two or three different ways. One way was, the Ranger's in a company would pick out somebody or know somebody that fit sort of the ideals they had. And they talked to the Captain, and the Captain would...would think it over. And if he liked you he...he gutted. He'd talk to the Colonel and then he went to see one of the Public Safety Commissioners. And the Public Safety Commissioner he went to see about me, he lived over at Marshall, I can't remember the man's name. But he had it both ways. Now, that was one way. Another way was, if some stout

politician, say the Governor, Lieutenant Governor, a State Senator, they might lean on the Colonel and say, we've got a awful good man. And he...he might look up and he'd be a Ranger. And ahso that....that....that's the way you got in. There ain't no use lying, it wasn't no...if you had an examination it was by what you'd done. But a lot of those old Sheriff's would get beat. And I shouldn'ta lot of em' made good Rangers, a lot of em' didn't make....wasn't very good. But you know they'd been used to their bailiwick and first one thing and another. And they weren't used to the kind of life we lived.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...when you first joined the Rangers, did you get any special training then as far as hand to hand combat or

LEWIS RIGLER: No..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Shoot....firing or..

LEWIS RIGLER: The first training we got after I went in was....I went in '47 and that was March of '48. As far as I know that was the first Ranger retraining school. I don't know, they might of had 'em before. And there you got firing, you shot. But I'd had a lot of fire arms training when I was a State Trooper. And ah.... but we never did go down there and Gonzauillas say, boys we're going to go out and shoot today. I'd already had all the training in hand to hand combat in the....as a State Trooper. And I'd had firing instructions and I used to go to the Dallas firing range and shoot and ah....so that...that...and that was the first time that I know that they had instructions for the Rangers. And I believe it was a weeks school.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah...paper work then, was it....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well it wasn't near what it is now. But you didn't have a secretary either. You had to type your own reports, you had to type your own weekly report, your car report, you had to do your own car report. You did your own weekly report and you did your own expense

account. And you had a...I remember Ithey gave me an old beat up portable typewriter and along seven, eighteen years after that Gonzauillas....ah Garrison called me one day, Colonel Garrison who was a wonderful person, he said, Lewis we've got a little money left over out of the budget for the Rangers. Said, what do you need bad. I said, Colonel if I can have a typewriter I'd be real happy. And so that's...people think about me getting a gun, I wanted a typewriter. That portable typewriter was wore out. So ah...it wasn't until several years after I went in the Rangers you had...that you didn't have to do your work.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When you were in the License Bureau, what kind of....what did....your pay?

LEWIS RIGLER: My pay?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh huh.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well when I went into the Department of Public Safety, for two months you got \$100.00 a month and your meals. You got down for the next six months, you got \$125.00 a month. Then for the next eight months you got \$150.00 a month I believe. And then after eighteen or twenty months, I can't tell you exactly, you got \$165.00 a month. And you got a motorcycle. And later on we got a car.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And then when you went into the Rangers?

LEWIS RIGLER: Got a car. And I'd say, I haven't written it down, but I'd say we were drawing about \$225.00 a month.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did they furnish you anything like uniforms or

LEWIS RIGLER: They didn't furnish me anything. And it was a number of years before we got clothing allowance. They didn't furnish you anything.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about your weapon?

LEWIS RIGLER: Didn't furnish you a weapon. Now they furnished you a weapon when you was in the Department of Public Safety and when you was Rangers you didn't get it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Now Rangers didn't have uniforms then. They still do not today do they?

LEWIS RIGLER: Shouldn't have. But people til long about 1900 and oh I guess in the 60's he decided....

ROBERT NIEMAN: (unintelligible) people?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...he was the senior Ranger Captain. Let me think about when that was. Anyway he got the clothing allowance for us. And he leaned on us and made everybody get aa gabardine suit. We all one time all had...that's it right up there. Everybody had on a gabardine suit. And I opposed it, but he was a good friend of mine and I didn't raise no hell about it. I wore it there, I didn't wear other times.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...speaking of clothing, Gonzauillas made a humorous statement about you, that if he'd known you didn't wear something quite he'd of never made you a Ranger.

LEWIS RIGLER: He said that if he'd of knew I was rounded headed and couldn't wear a hat he'd of never made me a Ranger.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was there any special re...ah.. requirements other than just the recommendation to be a Ranger?

LEWIS RIGLER: I think the....I think the age was....you had to be 30 years of age, if I'm right. And you had to have so many years of outstanding work as asupposedly as an officer and criminal investigator. I believe it was 5 years. And....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well what were your duties as a Ranger then

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh...I came here and I had six counties. Montague County, Wise County, Denton County, Cook County, Collin County and Grayson County. And you got to remember in

those days you had Sheriff's deals were two year terms. That's what your Sheriff's deal was. When I came here they had a Sheriff, a jailer and two deputies. Ah...Montague County had one deputy and a Sheriff and the Sheriff acted as jailer. Usually the Sheriff lived in the jail and the wife did the cooking. The county paid for their meals and everything. Wise County had a Sheriff and two deputies and lived in the jail. Denton County had a Sheriff and five or six deputies, he lived in the jail. The Sheriff...the Colin County had a Sheriff and two or three deputies. Ah...Grayson County was the biggest county and I think there was a total of nine people in the Grayson County Sheriff's office. Well those people didn't have any training. And...and because when ever they left they'd served two terms probably. There...there was no two term tradition. And some of the deputies left with them. In those days all you had to do to be a deputy was get a badge and a gun. That's all. So I was pretty well educated you know and...and ah...I was great reader. Ah...ah...I say...I say a great reader, I read a lot on criminal investigation. It interested me. And ah...I taught myself a lot by reading. And Gonzauillas was good. He was supportive. And ah...you'd get a call, the Sheriff maybe from Wise County said, I have a murder over here, a armed robbery, a rape or something. And you'd go over there and stay til you got that done. So I was...I'd say in a year's time I was putting \$30,000.00, \$35,000.00 a year on a car, working all kind of cases from cattle theft, burglary, armed robbery, murder. Just name it, I was there. And from '47 to '57 I had those six counties. And in 1957 they re-districted the state and they took Montague County and Wise County away from me. And ah...later on as they enlarged the Rangers Crowder called me and said that they got Charlie Moore who was a good friend of mine in the Rangers. This was about '60, he came in about the time Glenn Elliott did. He said, Lewis said he's here in Dallas and said he needs a county, would you mind giving up Collin County. And I said no, I don't...I like Collin County, but Charlie needs a county and you think it would

be all right, I have no objections. So I kept three counties, Denton County and this county and Grayson County until ah...Bill Wilson came up here. And by then they'd enlarged it again and there was a guy named Slick Alford who is now Sheriff down at Athens. He came into the company and Bill Wilson called and said, we need a said you got more than you need, would you give up Denton County. And I said, well if you think so I'll give up Denton County. So I judge about '70 I gave up Denton County. And then we got a Captain who wanted to get rid of me in the worse way and ah...so at least I...that was my feeling.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you...who was it?

LEWIS RIGLER: G. W. Burks. And ah...so he had a guy that got in the Rangers by the name of Jim Gant, who now works with the penitentiary system. And he came along and gave Jim Gant, by then Moore had moved on, and ah...was still in the Rangers, but he gave...he gave Gant Grayson and Collin County. And that just left me with one county. Cook County. And that was in about 1974 or '75. Just left me Cook County. Which is a sign that told me it's...that you know my number was up. I was old and and ah...in my opinion I...he...he needed me gone. I had maybe too much unspoken influence you know. Maybe, I don't know. He and I...I helped him two or three times. Kept him in the Rangers service. But that maybe my thinking. Anyway that's the way the thing came down. And in 1963 I retired. I had a job offered to me with the bank and I worked for the bank from 1977 till the end of '82.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Which bank was that?

LEWIS RIGLER: Gainesville National. It's now the Guaranty National. And ah...I asked 'em for a raise and they said no, they couldn't raise me, I was drawing some social security. They didn't believe in raising. And I said, well ah...I believe I'll leave. So I left and in 1983 I opened....stuck out a sign said Lewis Rigler Investments. And then I opened up a bail bond

business called, Able Bail Bond business and went in business for myself. That's my son that's in here a while ago.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mike?

LEWIS RIGLER: He's an accountant. A CPA. And we were down in a place across the tracks renting and then we built this place. We've been in this place oh about 30 months. We built this.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What is the address here?

LEWIS RIGLER: 316 West Broadway.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...when you went in the Rangers, did you ever do any horse back Rangering? You shake your head like about like Glenn Elliott feels about horses.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, you know I...on two occasions I rode....I rode a horse. We had a man up...man hunt up here in the northwest part of Cook County. And ah...I did ride a horse up there. Because it was the best means of transportation. Then Banks decided the Rangers ought to take part in a parade in Dallas, because of the Dallas baseball club was fixing to open the season and he and (unintelligible) me and a guy friend of mine named Jay Banks and we went down there and rode. I know I was a horse man. No way.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What was your feelings toward the ah....there was still some of them around , probably not Rangers, but the Ferguson Rangers?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh...I tell you about the Ferguson Rangers. Of course I have no proof of it except what I read and talking to Hickman. She run off Hickman and Stewart Stanley.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Governor Ma...Ma Ferguson.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...she ran 'em off and ...and ah...sold the damn jobs, there's no question about that. Turned people loose in the penitentiary and ah...she was elected...ah...he was elected and got kicked out and she was elected twice. So that's why some Rangers have....you know if

you went down the street here, not now maybe but for years, you went down the street here and you'd say, now Tom Hickman was a Ranger, and Lewis Rigler was a Ranger. Now who do you think served in the Rangers the longest. Well I guarantee you ten people out of ten would say Tom Hickman. Tom Hickman only served 13 years. And I served 30. But he is....he come along at a time the different ...where politics and things were...when the new Governor came in the Adjutant General was in charge of the Rangers. Everybody reported to the Adjutant General and Adjutant General was pardoned by the Governor. So that's the way the deal went.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Hum...ah...going back to your book. Well before I do that, when you first joined the Rangers were you made aware or what not of the "Ranger heritage". The heritage's of the Lee McNelly's the....so forth.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I knew a lot about that. I...as I say, I read a lot and after I got interested in the Rangers, I...I knew a lot about it. I...I talked to Gonzauillas and I'd talked to Ernest, and I'd talked to Bob Crowder. See BobErnest went in the Rangers in '37 and Bob went in '38. And Gonzauillas went in about '21, so I had lots of history there that I picked up. And then I'd read quite a bit.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Going to your book, could you ah...give us some feelings about the....and what they were...the moon light extradition's you talked about in your book.

LEWIS RIGLER: The moon extradition's? Well now I'm going to have to go...I'm going to have to re-think that. Ah ...we had a thing we called the East Texas merry go...yeah...

BILL UTSMAN: Excuse me Ranger you got (unintelligible)....

LEWIS RIGLER: But it did happen.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what was

LEWIS RIGLER: Well you didn't want to go 3,4, 5 and 6 months trying to deal it and Sheriff wouldn't...say Ardmore wanted to get rid of the son-of-a-bitch, you'd bring him down to the river and tell him to walk across that bridge and you'd be on the other side.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And that's the moon light extradition?

LEWIS RIGLER: That was the moon light extradition.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay, you mentioned the East Texas Merry-Go-Round.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well that was a wonderful thing. Wish we still had it. Ah...those things and one of the big things after I went in the Rangers, one of the big things was safe burglars. That was before your night deposit boxes and ah...these safe burglars mostly operated out of Dennison and Dallas. And they had 'em out at Beaumont and Houston and first one place and another. Lot of those guys handling that nitro, they'd blow 'em open or they'd knock the knob or they'd kidnap 'em or they'd peel 'em. And a lot of them were taking drugs. Wasn't a lot of drugs around then, but lot of those guys took drugs cause it was nerve wracking when you was handling nitro to blow a safe. And you got 'em in jail and they always told their girlfriend or somebody where they was going. If they didn't come back you checked that jail. Well say they got in jail at Grayson County. Well by the time that woman got up there and the lawyer called we'd already put 'em on the Merry-Go-Round and they might be in Greenville or Athens or Gainesville and we might run 'em around for ten, twelve days. And by then they'd want dope bad and wanted different things and then you'd take 'em and they make a bond and you have a bunch of statements and you'd go on about your business.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....describe the ah...when...I want to jump back here again. When you joined the Rangers, what kind of organization was it. Could, I mean, did you have a Captain, a Lieutenant, a Sergeant,....

LEWIS RIGLER: Just had a Captain.

ROBERT NIEMAN: A Corporal....a Corporal....

LEWIS RIGLER: Just had a Captain, that's all. You had a Ranger Captain, you had a 6 Ranger Captains and you had 45 Rangers. They had....

ROBERT NIEMAN: No Sergeants?

LEWIS RIGLER: No Sergeants. Historically there had been Sergeants. But there wasn't any when I went in and there hadn't been any in quite along...back in probably in the '30's. When I went in, what you had then, we sort of had what we call among the Rangers, we sort of had a number one man. And that was Bob Crowder. Whenever he was...when the Captain was gone, we sort of looked to Bob Crowder for...if we needed any advice or any...he sort of took over. We didn't have Rangers Sergeants, and I'm gonna judge til about 1954 or '55. And because the first they gave the Sergeant's exams Banks and (unintelligible) out of Company B made Sergeant.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When did the Lieutenant come in to being.

LEWIS RIGLER: Long after I left.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...

LEWIS RIGLER: They don't have any Ranger Privates anymore, which is a sad thing. That was part of the history of the Rangers was a Ranger Private. Hell you...now then you go, guys riding along...well, here's the thing about it you....I have nothing against women. God knows I've got three daughter-in-laws and five daughters and a wife. I'm not going to say anything against women. But you look up and here's a woman that never shot a pistol and she comes in the Rangers and she's immediately a Sergeant. Well, crap! That is...that's...that's.....that's

asinine. But whoever's running it didn't ask my opinion. But it ...when you did away with the Ranger Privates you did away with a hell of an institution.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...Lewis can you describe the crime book you talked about in your book. Talked about having asome kind of....I assumed that it was some kind book keeping up with people who were known criminals or....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: That might be coming through your area or....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well that...that came out, there was different ways that that came out. It might come from the Dallas police department, it might...some of it came from the DPS, some of it came from the FBI. It wasn'tif I remember right, it wasn't...didn't come on a certain day or certain time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Ah...do you ah...remember ah...the Clover Leaf sleigh?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh very well...that...that....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you describe what....the history of it and what happened and....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well there was a man, nice man named McFarland. I can't think of his first name. He lived down here out of Sanger two or three miles. He lost his mind. And ah....he ran his wife and his children off. And he had guns and he was gonna barricade himself in the house and everything. And his mother lived in California. And somebody called her or she might have been visiting in California. And she flew into Dallas. And he picked her up. And on the way back, they had a warrant for him, on the way back Sheriff Wylie Barnes in Denton, they arrested him...stopped him but the didn't arrest him. They let him and the mother talk 'em out of it. And she told Wylie she said, now tonight I'll get the guns and you come out in the morning. Well, that night Wylie called me. And ah....I said, well I'll meet you down at ah...Sanger in the

morning just a little bit before sun up. So I got up the next morning, I never did much dress like a Ranger you know, and I put on an old pair of blue jeans and a jacket, it was a little cool as I remember, snap brimmed hat and ah...went down there and there was five or six cars of officers and we started out there and on the way we met the mother. The mother said, I couldn't get the guns. He's still got the guns. So we drove up there andand there's a big field there you could see...see the house andand he was back down in that field. And he came walking up that field with a gun, now some people said it was a shot gun, some people said it was a rifle. That's not right. It was a hand gun.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What kind, do you know? Thirty caliber?

LEWIS RIGLER: I think it was a .38. But as I remember it was an automatic. And started cussing and telling me, get away from his property and said, one of you crosses that fence I'm gonna kill ya. So Wylie Barnes I guess he got about as far from here to middle of that street and Wylie, we was all back of cars, and ole Wylie said, Lewis he said, I can hit him from here. And I said, if you hit him from here with that rifle you're going to kill him. And ah...I said, let me see what I can do. So I stepped out from back of the car and hollered at him. Told him I'd like to talk to him and I said, I...you know I've got a got. I said, I'm gonna take my gun off. And so I took it off of me. I said, now I'll you what I'm gonna do, you've got a gun and I haven't, you know I threw my gun down, now I'm going to turn my back on you. Are you going to shoot me if I turn my back on you. Well he said, didn't know. I said, well I'm going to turn my back on you. Turn all the way around where you can see I hadn't got any gun and I said, I've got on shoes instead of boots so I can't have a hide-out gun. I said, now I'm going to turn around slow, look at me. So I turned around and looked back at him. I said, I didn't have a gun did I. He said, no. And I said, well I'll tell you what I'm gonna do. I said, you've got a problem. And you and I are going to

discuss it and I'm going to leave these officers here and you stay on that side of the fence and I'll stay on this side of the fence and we'll walk down there to your house. House set back off the road 50 yards or something. And he said, fine. So we walked down there and I told the officers I said, now ya'll stay here. Me and this man ain't got no problems. Don't want nobody down here with no gun or nothing. So when we got down there I come around and I said, now I'm on your property, you got a gun, I haven't got a gun don't you think you ought to give me that gun. You don't need it. Yeah fine. I said, what's your problem. Oh he said, I've had lots of problems. He said, I'm not making any money and my wife and kids are gone. He said, I've got a bunch of clover seed and I can't get what they're worth and I said, what do they want...how much you want for 'em. He told me. I said, hell I'll just write you a check. So I said, you got any checks here, they had blank checks then, you know. He said, yeah I got one. Let me have it. So I wrote him a check and ah...on the Sanger bank. And I said, now let's go over here and said, get your money, I'll...or you can just deposit it next day. He said, I'll just deposit it next day. I said, now they got a warrant for you over at Sheriff's office, let's just go on over there and let's get rid of it. So I said, your mother will come on it. So we went over to the Sheriff's office. Never had a bit of trouble. Well, they sent him somewhere and three, four, five or six months, I can't tell you how long, Wylie called me again. Said, that son-of-a-bitch is back out there at the farm raising hell. Said, you're gonna have to come, would you come down. I said, no I'm not coming. Just send him a notice to come to jury, jury duty. So he said, all right. So he sent him a notice to come in, that was like a Tuesday, and told him to be in jury duty on Monday. So Monday he come in to jury duty and sat down and I walked up there and I said, told him I said, Mr. McFarland there's another warrant for you. So we went down and they put him in the mental place again. And he got out and so he went over to the Sheriff's office and they...Wylie thought

they was going to kill him. And Wylie went out the back door of the Sheriff's office there on the square and run down to the police station and they come up there and they killed him on the courthouse lawn. Killed McFarland.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was he armed?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah, he was armed, had a pistol, but if they'd of called me that night I could of arrested him. I had no fear of him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah...when you went to work the case did you wait for the Sheriff of the County to call you or did you ...could you say, well hey this....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well it depended. It depended. If you had a Sheriff that was honest and meant well, I never went into their county without invited. And if you had a Sheriff that ah...you didn't trust you didn't open up your business with 'em. Ah...I had a Sheriff that turned out later to be a pretty good friend of mine, ah... me and the former Sheriff made a case on him on theft after he was elected. He was elected in November and we made a case on him and he didn't take office for three or four months. He finally beat the case, which is all right. But that in Grayson County well hell, he and I were not on the same page. So I didn't work with him at all. In fact we went over there and Gonzauillas got a complaint about gambling over there at the Top of the Hill or Top of the something, and we made a raid over there while he was Sheriff and ah...but later on he got beat by Woody Bynum who was a good friend of mine. And ah...he's still living, that ole' boy is, and he...we get along fine. But ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: If you was on a case and let's say you had to go to Gregg County, Longview...

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...would you notify the Ranger in charge there or...

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes, oh yes, I'd call 'em. Yeah...you beat. I was looking for all the help I could get.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What if you had to go to Butte, Montana?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, we'll give a example of that closer to home. Oklahoma was dry. The whole state. They run whiskey in from Louisiana and Texas in to Oklahoma. So many of the Sheriff's in Oklahoma and the county attorney's were corrupt that you didn't...you didn't trust them. And a lot of times certain counties in Oklahoma I wouldn't go into unless I had a man with the Oklahoma crime bureau to meet me there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: But you didn't have to get permission from your Captain or

LEWIS RIGLER: Not at all.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Just...you just went.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah. I might send 'em a message or call and say, look I'm going to Kansas, I'll be gone two or three days.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...did you ah...did you ever have to use your gun?

LEWIS RIGLER: Did I ever use my gun? Never.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did anyone ever try to use one on you?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I've had a few...I've had a gun drawn on me, I've had a knife drawn on me two or three times. Ah...I was hit in the head with a...by a woman who took off her shoe while I was arresting her husband and his friend. Took off her shoe and hit me in the back of the head with it, sort of knocked me out. But ah...no I...I've disarmed people ah...I took a knife away from 'em, I was lucky. You see I'll tell you one thing fellows, I had a horror of having to kill somebody. I had a horror. I could of done it, don't misunderstand me. But I had a horror because I knew some day I was going to be old. And I think once you kill somebody even if you're

justified, unless you're completely justified, I think it would bother you. I've seen it happen a lot of times, it would bother people. Doesn't bother some of 'em. And it shouldn't, if you're justified. But you I...each persons made up different. I had a...I was so thankful when I retired in '77 that I'd never taken anybody's life.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What kind of gun did you carry?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, the gun that I trusted the most was a .45 automatic that I carried in the car with me. I also would have in the car with me a ah...38, later on it was .357. And personally I always liked the little five shot Smith & Wesson revolver, just to stick in your pocket, weighed about 16 oz.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Quote, "hide out gun"?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well not necessarily.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Or backup gun.

LEWIS RIGLER: Not necessarily. As a backup gun I had a....I'd strap on a .32 automatic you know, but that didn't happen very often.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What other kind of armaments did you carry in the car, such as mace or...

LEWIS RIGLER: I had...I had a rifle that I carried in later years that was a carbine. Which is a...I believe it's a 50 shot, which I liked real well. And I didn't...later on I carried mace and ah...never did use it in...in making an arrest. But I had it. Handcuffs, you know. Two pair of handcuffs. Duct tape, first aid kit and ah...that's about it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I have in my notes here, going back to McFarland, that T. J. McFarland...

LEWIS RIGLER: That is it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Aided Jenkins?

LEWIS RIGLER: Uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And I had here parenthesis...I ...parenthesis Y aided parenthesis Jenkins when check...you made the check I believe ah...to ah...Jenkins. Had him make it out to Jenkins. Or you made the check out to Jenkins instead of T. J. McFarland.

LEWIS RIGLER: I don't know. I...that...that escapes me, I'd have to read up on it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Ah... what was some of the...the worst crimes that you worked?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, I worked so many of them. Ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: I guess I'm...ah...let's start...well let's define that a little bit then ah...let's start with what to me would be the worse of the worse ah...involving children.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well the two little girls that got killed in Grayson County ah...certainly affected me a lot because I had some children about their age. I had a daughter 10 and a daughter 12 about the time that those two little girls got killed.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When was this?

LEWIS RIGLER: It'll be in my book, I'm gonna say it had to be ah...10, she's ah 30....I'd say it had to be 28...28 years ago. So 30 years off of '94 would be 64, I'd say it'd be in...between '65 and '70. It....I...I've got it in my book but ah...they...they were killed by a no good son-of-a-gun, had no reason to kill 'em, you know. Killed in broad open daylight. And ah...I didn't find the first body. The first body was found there north of Sherman. It had been moved by the time I got there. The body had been moved. I was at the crime scene. The second girl had been missing three or four days and we had a big search going on for her north and west of Henderson. I didn't find that body, but somebody found it and Willie Blanton and I immediately went to the scene and her body was face down on some damp leaves in sort of a ravine. And it was sort of cool weather during that time and the dampness and her body hadn't disintegrated. She was about 11 or 12 years old. And she'd been shot in the back. And I stayed in that ah...area there for four or

five hours, we you know, shifted the leaves and the dirt and taking pictures. And it...those two had a terrific affect on me. I...I...I ah...I don't mean it ah...kept me awake many nights but ah...ah...I wanted that guy so bad and we got him and we got him the death penalty and they reversed it, finally got lift penalty. Life. I don't know where he is now, but ah...they were terrible. And then the death of Kenneth Harrison here, he was a State Trooper. And in June of 1963 I had just remarried and my fir...second wife and I...I had to go to Denton to talk to an ole' boy who wasn't going to be under arrest, I had to get a statement from him on a felony that he knew something about. So it was almost sun down and I told Joyce, my wife I said, you want to ride to Denton with me. Well we came over and got on 35 and we went south, she was sittin' over sort of close to me, and we met Kenneth Harrison, he was going north. And he said, watch it there. And ah...he was about 6'4", hell of a nice guy, had a wife and three children. And we went on and I got back from Denton about eleven o'clock and about midnight I got a call from the State Trooper here named ah...I can't remember his name, his was good friend of mine too, telling me Ken had been killed. And ah...Ken pulled off of 35 and he'd picked up two people just south of town there, their car had went dead. And the guy had a wooden leg. And he had a woman with him. And he missed searching her purse. In those days they locked up the jail at night and if you wanted to put somebody in the county jail you had to call the police station and they sent a key over, that's how backward we were. And he come on the radio and he had a drunk in the front seat with him he'd picked up somewhere, and he said, 1015 something three times, which meant three prisoners. And when he said that, right here about two blocks south, this guy started shooting him in the back, just about where the ...where the ah..Holiday Inn is, maybe east of that. And he lost control of the car and ran into a feed store, it had the overhead door, and that pinned that car and there was people in the car. That had a big affect on me,

because Ken was a dear friend. And I investigated the case. Finally got a life sentence for the ole' boy and didn't do anything they wanted.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What was your most difficult case to solve?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh, I would judge that the...the girls ah...in...in...in Sherman. I would say that that was quite difficult.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Any cases that you were never able to solve that....

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes, the...you know you remember the ones your not able to solve. I sure remember we never did solve the Virginia Carpenter case. She disappeared from the campus of Texas Woman's University in 1948.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Tell us about it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh it's a long story.

ROBERT NIEMAN: That's all right.

LEWIS RIGLER: She was coming to school and I judge she was 21 years old. She was coming school from Texarkana and gonna enroll in the summer at Texas Woman's University, which had been, might have been Texas State College for Woman. And before that it was the CIA or something like that co...ah...College of Industrial Arts I believe. And in those days the trains ran and she rode a train from Texarkana to Paris to Sherman to Whitesboro and south to ah... Denton and she got here. Okay ah...she got in there after dark and I have it, it's in the book probably, and ...and there was a lady from ah...Texarkana that was with her and I believe that she andandshared a...Virginia and this lady shared a cab driven by Jack Zachary. And Jack was sort of a rascal I guess, that's what people sort of said and I don't think he denied it, but he and I got along just fine. But he let the woman out first and he said that he took her on to a dorm down there and she got out of the car and saw two people and she spoke to them and said, what are

ya'll doing over here. She also gave me a check for her trunk and she had a hat box, and a cosmetic case and three or four pieces of luggage with her. Which he unloaded there. So he said. And the next day he went down, you couldn't get the trunk that night because unloading and all and the office wouldn't be open. He went down the next morning and got the trunk and took it and put it on the front of the dorm, which is common practice. She gave him a dollar to pick up that trunk. He picked it up the next day. And four or five days went by, or three or four, I can't tell you how long, before I got the call about it. And we never did have but two suspects. One was Jack Zachary and the other one was a boy that she'd gone with named Kenny Branham who was living in Dallas. And ah...ah...I put Zachary on a polygraph, we just had two in Texas at that time, one was at Austin and one at ah...Houston. The guy did the polygraph in Austin told me that the polygraph showed that Zachary was telling me the truth. Also Zachary had a lawyer who was a good friend of mine and when I talked to Zachary about getting on the polygraph he said, well I've got to check with two people to see if I want to go. And I said, who are you going to check with. And he said, I'm going to check with my lawyer and to see what he thinks, and I'm going to check with my doctor cause I've had some heart problems. And I said, well if can go you meet me here at the police station in the morning at ah...7:00. So I told the officer that was with me I said, well he's got a real out not to take the polygraph. He's going to talk to his lawyer, he's going to talk to his doctor. So the next morning we went down there at 7:00 and there he was. We took him to Austin and the polygraph said, well why don't you get something to eat and then come back and let him lay down an hour or two and rest. So he gave him the exam, took an hour or so. He said, I'll write you but said, I'm going to study this. Said, doesn't look like to me he has any guilty knowledge. I didn't put Kenny Branham on the polygraph. I didn't think that he was good enough, and also Kenny Branham was sort of a pathological liar. But years later

two city policemen, or two city detectives from Denton probably 20 years later decided they could solve the case. They came and got my notes and they...and they went up to ah...Kansas and found Kenny Branham after 20 - 25 years and put him on the polygraph and the polygraph cleared him. So, we worked on it hard, we did everything we knew to do. Her mother lived at Texarkana, Hazel Carpenter. I stayed in touch with her through the years, she died about 10 years ago. Just one of those things, never did find her and don't know what happened to her and that was in '48, '88 would be 40...be 46 years ago I guess. So it's just an interesting thing.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Hum. Could ah...what were your relations with the press?

LEWIS RIGLER: With most of 'em, excellent. With most of 'em, excellent. I can't...I can't remember ever having any trouble with the press. Ah...I understood what the press' ob...object was...objective. And I...I wasn't bashful, I'd say, now boys and fellow I tell ya, I'd like to do this but I can't. And ah...ah...I remember when we arrested this boy for the murder of the two little girls over at Sherman. A guy called me from the Associated Press and he said, do you think you've got the right man. And I said, well sir I wouldn't have him in jail if I didn't think I had the right man. And he didn't argue you know, cause you just...I never had any trouble with the press. In fact some of the people, A. C. Green a writer out of Selina, Biffle. Kent ...Biffle out of Dallas and those people were real good friends of mine. And ah...they just...I just never had any trouble at all.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Is there any kind of crime you didn't work. I mean you've worked murders, ah....were going to talk about a little bit later, (unintelligible), prostitutes and ah...theft. What about organized crime?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well...

ROBERT NIEMAN: In the traditional sense of what most people consider the Mafia.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well no....no....no. They were having quite a bit of organized crime in the safe burglary's but that was organized by gangs. It wouldn't be like the Mafia, no.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Who was ah...not necessarily physically, but it could be physically, but physically or mentally or ... who was the toughest person you ever came up against?

LEWIS RIGLER: You mean as an adversary?

ROBERT NIEMAN: As an adversary. Physically or mentally or ...the smartest.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh gosh that...that'd be hard for me to say. A lot of the guys that were safe burglars and robbers, if they'd turned their talents in another way they....they'd of been real successful. They had good minds ahyour real ah....good criminal that wants to be a criminal hardly ever gets caught with much, you know. A lot of 'em are....but now most of the big strong guys and tough guys I immediately came friends with. Because in my humble opinion, I have a personality that meshes with most people. And I practiced it. Now I hope you see and I hope people see that when you see me you see what you get. I ain't gonna pull no wool over your eyes and not gonna try to make a flashy story. What you see is what you get. And I found that working with criminals, that's why I hated to see 'em do away with the Ranger privates. The Ranger private is a private who could do more with a...with a suspect than a Captain could ever do. Because he's down on the ground with 'em. I'm just a poor Ranger private, I'm not to smart, I'm trying to learn as I go along, now would you help me. And you see.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...you were...you made the Rotary rounds I think you said.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I was a member of the Rotary Club in Grand Prairie and I was President of this Rotary Club up here in 1951. And I spoke to a lot of your Rotary Clubs, a lot of service clubs, a lot of Church groups and many, many, I would judge in my tenure as a Ranger I probably spoke to 200,000 grade school and high school and college students. I was a speaker at

ah...the Texas Woman's University several times for several years. They graduating music students, talking on public relations. I...I talked to classes there on government. Ah...and ah...I...I..did a lot of it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...I want...I ...a question here I do have I want to go back on..Virginia Carpenter.

LEWIS RIGLER: All right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: About the same time, did you ever suspect any tie in, and we're going to talk about this in depth a little bit later, with the Texarkana phantom killer.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I had to think that. See that happened in '46 and see disappeared in '48. I had to think it. Because she would probably have been about two years older than people who got killed over there. A girl that got killed.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well we're going to talk about that in depth a little bit later. Ah...you want to tell us about, I'm not sure I'm going to pronounce this name right, Euclid Fant.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah ole Euclid he...he was a...I knew Euclid ah...Euclid came from a wealthy family. The Fant Mill and Elevator Company. I believe they...they...they...perfected Gladiola Flour. They used to have a big mill in Sherman, and they had a mill here and all around. And he was the youngest child of Mr. and Mrs. Fant, and I believe they only had two children. And when he was quite young they sent him to school in Nashville, Tennessee I believe. It might have been a Presbyterian school. And ah...he had an older brother but his brother was 20 years older than him. And ah...he...I believe he was in the service and he got out and he went into business, it was over at Sherman and every time he went in the business it went haywire. He had a radio station I believe and two or three businesses. And he was married and I believe he had two or three children. And ah...he...he...he was sort of a failure but he still lived in a beautiful

home and had, in other words his brother was going to see to him, I mean his brother didn't particularly like hishis losing money, but he would sure stay with him. And he left to go to Dallas one day and I think four or five days later they found his car down there close to the train station with the keys and his identification, his driver's license, his purse in the car. We never did find him. Never did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....any ah...opinions what happened?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well my opinion is, he wanted to get away and disappear. That's my opinion, but maybe I'm wrong. But I believe that. After his disappearance, several years, quite a few years, his mother died and there was a quite a pot to be divided and he never showed up. But there was a old man lived in Sherman that was a friend of ah...the Fant's, with this...this fella's father and mother. They were about the same age. And he took a trip every year. And he knew Euclid from the time he was a little child. Then every year he took a trip, his wife died but he still took a trip and he was going to Hawaii. And he was in...somewhere in California, I have it documented somewhere, at a bus stop and he saw...he said he saw Euclid Fant sittin' there. And I said, do you know it was Euclid Fant. Said, yeah I've known him for years, he said, I walked up and I said, Euclid and he told him give him another name. Said, I'm an accountant, I don't know who your talking about. And ah...I sort of believed the old man, he had no reason to lie. He said, I know it was Euclid. Said, I started to grab him and wrestle with him and the police would have arrested us both. But I don't know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...you talked in your book about the lack of security in the Dallas police department with Lee Harvey Oswald.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah, in nineteen hundred and sixty.....November '63 he was coming to Dallas, I believe I'm right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Kennedy.

LEWIS RIGLER: Kennedy was coming to Dallas. And we always, if the President come in your area your part of the security. It's sort of a pool. There is no way that you can protect the President. Absolutely. Time he made up his mind to kill him, he's going to kill him. Then we'd go and we mind it much. We'd have a meeting maybe and they'd give us a little pin to wear or something with the Secret Service. And they put ah...Ernest and I on the third floor of this big old merchant deal and ah....Harry Stevenson, he's dead now, was a Captain with the Dallas police department. He was sort of in charge. And the offices, this thing set here and they had offices going off the halls like this you know. And then we weren't supposed to let people come up into the rotunda. But you couldn't keep 'em back. And I looked down there and they room I guess for 600 or 700 people and they were putting the coffee on the table and the water and they had the steaks a cooking. And the Mayor of Dallas was there and ah...lady had a radio and ah...I told her I said, you stand there I want to hear how the parade's going. When I left here that morning about 6:00 it was foggy, but the fog had lifted down there by this time. And she was standing there and all of a sudden this guy broke in and said there's a shooting, shooting and in just a few minutes here came the car withwith Johnson, I mean with ah....Kennedy and Connally in the car going up to Parkland Hospital. And it came right up by this place. And I guess in 10 or 15 minutes Eric Johnson, the mayor, got up and said there had been a tragedy. And ah...I'll never forget it. It looked like everything moved in slow motion. You could look down there below you and people was crying and wringing their hands. And you went out on the parking lot and everything moved in slow motion. Cars moved, looked like time was sort of standing still. Well Crowder andand the Sergeant who was Lester Robertson, had gone to Austin and I didn't have anybody to report to so Ernest and I went down to the Sheriff's office.

And ah...we stayed down there and a guy from the Sheriff's office came and told me said, they've arrested a fellow. And told me his name. And he's at the police station. So I started looking for Crowder. And so I finally got a hold of him and he...he'd come in and he was at the police station. So I went out and got my car and I went and made sure I had my badge and my identification, because I was going to the police station and find Crowder. I couldn't get him on the phone but I knew he was up there. And I figured they'd have guards on the door. But when I got up there it was pandemonium. The halls were full of people, talking and hollering and first one thing and another. And he was down at the end of the hall where Will Fritz was. He was Chief of Detectives or Captain of Detectives. And the FBI was there and Bob Crowder was tall and he was up against the wall and somehow he saw me working my way down and he came and I said, what do you want me to do. He said, go home. So I went home. And ah...I told my wife when I came home I said, that's the damnedest thing I ever saw. And then they made a hell of a mistake, they announced at what hour and what time they were going to transfer him from Dallas to ah...down to the Sheriff's office. And ah...I told Joyce I said, son-of-a-bitch is gonna get killed, you can't transfer him. I said, they're probably going to kill some other people. And a lot of people said, well you know Ruby had to be paid, Ruby had...listen there was hundreds of people that would have killed that son-of-a-bitch. Hundreds of people that were so torn up. You see Kennedy had a...he wasn't...might not have been the most popular guy in the world in Texas, but the people that loves Kennedy's love 'em to death. You can catch a son-of-a-bitch out here, a guy out here who's a Kennedy pinned in the middle of the street and they'd say it was all right. I'm not criticizing, you know it was the Kennedy mis...it was the Kennedy mystique. And you can't explain it you have to accept it. And there was lots of people that would of killed him.

Jack Ruby in my opinion was acting alone and he had a gun available. I knew ole' Jack, he wasn't a member of Mafia or nothing. In fact he went broke about a half a dozen times.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do ah...do you think Oswald was working alone?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah. You see here's the thing about it. The man who shot Reagan, he's in mental...in...in Washington, DC. The man who shot ah...ah...the Alabama ah..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Wallace.

LEWIS RIGLER: Wallace. The man that shot and killed Robert Kennedy, who's in jail in California, the woman who shot at Ford, hell there ain't nobody saying there's a big conspiracy about them.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you help in the preparations for Sam Rayburn's funeral?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I'd say that I didn't do much about the preparations, but they called me and told me what day the funeral was going to be and we had a guy...week or two before that they knew Sam Rayburn was terminal, he was at Baylor Hospital. And I can't tell you how many days before he died, probably four or five, six or seven, theyI was told to be over there. And they already had there lines laid and their telephones in place. And then I was notified to pick up a fella' who had been in the Congress of the United States, he was from Arizona I believe, I don't believe he was still active. But I was assigned to pick him up at the Grace Hotel in Sherman the day of the funeral. Told what time to be there. And it was just like a country fair. People were everywhere. Now they had a air field at ah...Sherman and Kennedy came in with his plane and they shipped down a big open Lincoln convertible sedan. And then Johnson came down with his plane and they shipped their people in. Roosevelt was over in where they have the Masters in Augusta, Georgia...I said Roosevelt...Eisenhower...where they have the....he was at Augusta. Eisenhower was the former President and he called the Air Force over there and they

had got a plane from the Air Force and flew him in. Harry Truman lived in Independence, Missouri and he went over and caught the old traded train and rode down by himself. I mean he had...somebody was with him. They rode...they got into Dennison at 5:00 in the morning and he called an old friend of his and he come down and picked him up and they had coffee and he brought him to the funeral. Shows you four different ways that people got to the funeral. And so they had the helicopters and they brought Kennedy in at one spot and Johnson in at another spot. And that was a big deal. Then they had the funeral and they took him out there and had his grave side ceremony with four people standing there, Kennedy, Eisenhower,..we get in there...had Kennedy, Eisenhower, Truman and Johnson. Three people who had been President and one that would be President there at the grave side. But it was a....it was quite a deal. And ah...something that Sam Rayburn wouldn't....wouldn't have liked at all. I knew Mr. Sam a long time. He was a plain person, very nice man. Lived over at Bonham. Ah...never...never amassed any money. Ah...delightful fella'. Ah...he used to come down, they had a big Senator up in Oklahoma that he liked, and he had a house over there in the southern part and I used to...they...I used to meet the Oklahoma Highway Patrol here at the bridge and take Sam to Sherman and the Sheriff from Sherman, Woody Blanton was a friend of mine, and he'd take him on to Bonham after he visited over there. Dear...dear man.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...did you...did you meet the Presidents personally?

LEWIS RIGLER: I met Johnson personally. I met Eisenhower personally. I met Truman personally. I never did meet Kennedy.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about other dignitaries? Was ah...say Richard Nixon there?

LEWIS RIGLER: No.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh huh.

LEWIS RIGLER: No I don't...he wasn't there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Connally?

LEWIS RIGLER: I'm not sure Connally was there...but he wasn't....he wasn't...I...I...I didn't see him. I don't remember.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you talk to us about the ah...the Beaumont roundup.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh...that would...could never happen again and I don't know how that happened. But it...it started, it just ballooned and anybody that they wanted to talk to they called the Sheriff and they got a warrant and they would pick 'em up and bring 'em....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well...what....what was it?

LEWIS RIGLER: Burglars, mostly safe burglars. Mostly safe burglars. Robbers. They had them there from everywhere.

ROBERT NIEMAN: In Beaumont?

LEWIS RIGLER: In Beaumont. And of course we'd all, you know, it was highly...it wouldn't work now but it worked then. But we had people that would walk up to a Sheriff and say, look I don't want to go to Beaumont, said I guilty of doing a burglary in your county. That's how...the word got out that if you went to Beaumont you was going to make a confession. I...I...I don't whether...I don't how legal it was, but that's the way it was.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I know they were extremely ah...

LEWIS RIGLER: I would say that they were quite convincing. Now I didn't...I wasn't a major participant ...I didn't participate other than we were working on the death of ah...of Herbert Noble and ah...ah...we had some people down there that were took down there, we talked to them about it, but I never touched a sole and I didn't participate. I'm not....nobody there, you know,

I...in fact ah...I...I...I didn't like the situation and I called Crowder and told him I wanted to come home.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...what ah...is there any prisoners or crooks that you, I don't want to use the word admire but, kind of liked?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I liked...that was...the professionals ah...yeah, I liked 'em, formed a good friendship with them. Ah...several of them. And lots of them. The ones that were...there professional in their work. So a lot of those guys ah...ah...were rather gentle by nature. But they were safe burglars, or they were armed robbers and ah...ah...I never did form much with a...with a burglar. I somehow...but armed robbers and ah... safe burg...well there's safe burglary, that would be a burglar, but I mean a house burglar, I never did form much, but a lot of 'em yeah I...I knew 'em through the years. And ah...I knew...you know I had several of 'em that told me said, now Lewis you've been nice to me and you've been good to me and you let me see my wife and my daughter and you saw that I got cigarettes and you were kind and I'll tell you, the son-of-a-bitch ever gives you any trouble I'll kill him for you. I said, you're my kind of man.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you ever go...work against a sociopath, guy who just didn't have any feelings at all.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes, the guy that killed ah...Kenneth ah...Harrison was a...had no feeling at all. He killed two or three people. And I was talking to him and I said, aren't you sorry that you killed Kenneth Harrison, left a widow and three children. Oh he said, if I'd known him I might have been sorry, but said, I didn't know him. Said, I had no...I had no feeling. Which I think is the way that those people operate.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well we talked about Harrison. What about Onis Hodges?

LEWIS RIGLER: Onis Hodges? Well Onis Hodges was a ...an old boy, at one time he was a guard at the...I believe at the Ford plant at Dallas when they had a factory there in east Dallas. Later on he drove a butane truck. And then he decided he wanted to be Sheriff and he ran for Sheriff. And he was elected in Denton County I'm going to judge...you see you run in the odd and take office in the even, so he ran in '48 and was elected and took office on a...probably the first day of January 1949. And he had no training as a ... to be a Sheriff, an officer, I liked him all right, I'm not saying this against him I'm just telling you. And he hired some people who had no particular ability. One of the boys he hired...one of the fella's he hired was an old relief pitcher had been in the major leagues and I can't think of his name, lazy, had no ability as an officer. And he had a fella' who was a little bit mentally off over in Crumb, Texas seven miles east of Denton. I was over in Montague County working on a deal when I got the call. They had a curb there at Crumb about that tall and there was a barber shop there and the barber was in there and he was head of the choir. And the family of this man had asked him not to let this man sing in the choir because he was an embarrassment. And this guy had a shotgun and he was coming down the street and that barber and another guy was in there, they managed to get out through a little window in the back of that barber shop. And as I remember, coming down the street he shot at somebody and sort of dusted their butt. But he went into that barber shop and Onis and this deputy went flying out there and they pulled into the service station and said, where is he. And they said, over in that barber shop. And they pulled up over there and got out of the car and when they stepped up on the curb he shot through the glass. And it was some pellets hit the...the deputy and ah...but it put Onis' eyes out. He never saw anything else. And he was elected Sheriff I think twice more. And he went up to Philadelphia or Baltimore somewhere and got a seeing eye dog. Came back to Denton and it was a foggy morning and his wife told him said, Onis said,

let me call the deputies to come get you. Said, it's foggy out. And he said, no me and this dog got to learn how to get to the Sheriff's office, it was probably 15, 20, 25 blocks. And so he started walking and a guy come along throwing the Dallas Morning News, and he ran over him and the dog and killed 'em both.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Hum. Ah...what...how did you get the nickname Ned?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh, that was ole' Bob put that on me said I was...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Bob?

LEWIS RIGLER: Bob Crowder. He said I looked like Ned in the first reader with my hat.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...the jelly bean ranger?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, that came ah...that..that came from Hickman and them because I didn't...I didn't dress like the Rangers, I dressed in a more different deal. And they called me a jelly bean. Remember used to have guys hung around the drug store called jelly beans.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And finally the Shetland Pony Ranger?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I was in the Shetland Pony business and I...one of my little studs got loose or stallion ran down the street and I was riding him back bare back and he come to the...to the pavement and he stopped and I didn't, broke my wrist.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Any particular case that you remember better than any other? That's a standout.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh...I...I'd say the Grayson County case and the Virginia Carpenter case, the Herbert Noble case.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did we talk about the Herbert Noble case? Let's talk about it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well Herbert Noble was known as the cat. He and Benny Benion in the '30's ...ah...Benion...Benion had a policy deal in Dallas. The policy is just like the Texas lottery,

except they paid out more than the Texas lottery paid out. And they mostly called on the poor in...in that area and they had salesmen out and you picked your numbers and you could bet a quarter. I...I...bet in years past before I went in law enforcement, I'd bet with them, give 'em...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Kind of like the old numbers racket?

LEWIS RIGLER: Numbers, that's it, the policy. They called it policy. And he and Herbert had a falling out and Herbert went in business and ah...the rumor was that Benion wanted him killed. And ah...I was stationed I believe at Grand Prairie, and Benion had...I mean ah...Herbert Noble had two cadillacs just alike. He lived in Oak Cliff. And one of the cadillac needed something done to it and so he told his wife said, you take my cadillac and go to the shop and I'll take your cadillac, I've got to go to Ft. Worth. He was a pilot and he'd bought a bunch of old planes over there. And he got as far as Grand Prairie and he heard it on the radio that there'd been a blow up at a certain area. And his wife went out and got in the car and they'd wired it with dynamite and killed her. And ah...that brought about a string of killings that went on and attempts on his life and I think he sort of relished being the cat. That was his nickname, Herbert the Cat Noble. And he finally moved up here where the big lake is now, Lake Lewisville. And he had some land there which later became part of that lake. And went down there to see him and I said, Herbert god darn it, move out of my territory, you're going to get killed. Oh he said, I'm telling you what I'm gonna do Lewis, said, I've got a airplane said, I'm gonna load it with dynamite and said, I'm gonna fly into the bears house out in Las Vegas, that Benion had moved Vegas by then. And on August 7th I think it was 1953, I got a call about 10:30 I guess, that he'd went to get his mail, drove up to the mailbox and they'd put the dynamite underneath the drive part there and they were hid in some trees about 80 yards up the hill there. And they blew up his car and blew him half into. Never did solve it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What other cases?

LEWIS RIGLER: Gosh I don't know. It's a lot of them.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, tell us about ah...your undercover work in the prostitute houses.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well those...that thing should of never happened. What happened there...

ROBERT NIEMAN: And when.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I would judge it started....they started making a rumble on it about 1967 or '68. Bob Crowder was Captain. We had a commissioner that was from Richardson . I don't recall his name. And he was the one putting the pressure on and as long as Gonzauillas lived...I mean as long as Garrison lived he couldn't control Garrison on it. But after Garrison died he put the pressure on I guess the people in Austin, that would be my opinion. I don't know that. But as long as Crowder was Captain of Company B he didn't...he wouldn't do it. Well Bob had to retire on...on September the....August 31, 1969, he had to retire. And then shortly...then the next day, September 1st, Bill Wilson took over. And the word came out of Austin that we had to close down the prostitution in Texarkana. And I didn't like the idea because you know it wasn't...you was going to lose. So two or three times well I'd hear it was gonna happen and I'd get a Judge to issue a subpoena for me on some old case. Well finally they made me go. And I went over and the first time I went in to a house of prostitution and Lester waited for me and we arrested three people, a madame and two whores. And the next time they had a place over there, and I can't remember the name of it, they said nobody had ever got in it. And so I went over there and I got in that one and arrested two or three people. And then we finally had the trials and ah...they...they...I knew we was gonna lose, and we did lose. Cause the jury was out five minutes the first time on the prostitute, found her not guilty. And the second time on the madame running the whore house they were out a minute and a half. So I got out and I called Austin and I said,

I'm gonna tell ya, we've lost this son-of-a-bitch and I won't you can fire my ass, but ain't chasing no more whores.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah...I think you mentioned to me when we were together down in Waco at the reunion this year, that you'd had before you went, lots of friends that volunteered to want to go with you on this....

LEWIS RIGLER: And then wouldn't go. Then wouldn't go. When it come time to go they had something else to do. And I saw officers who came up in the days where they'd never been in a whore house. And they were brave until you started talking about them going in the whore houses. They was nervous.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well you talked in your book about going in the whore house. Tell us about that.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh it wasn't any problem. I just went in.

ROBERT NIEMAN: From...you...you tell a humorous story once your in there.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...yeah.

MIKE RIGLER: It's all yours.

LEWIS RIGLER: Okay Mike, I'll lock up.

MIKE RIGLER: I've got this door locked and you got the key.

LEWIS RIGLER: All right. Well, ah...it...it...wasn't...when I went to that first one I made the deal so quick, went in there and I told the lady, well I never do like to have sex unless I wash my hands. I don't know why. I...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Why your hands?

LEWIS RIGLER: I was (unintelligible) ...yeah. So she gave me a towel and I went in the bathroom and was washing and finally Lester came in and then....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Lester?

LEWIS RIGLER: Robertson. He was later...he was the Sergeant. Dear friend of mine, he was here on Highway Patrol and I helped him get in the Rangers in '54. Late was my Sergeant in Dallas and a real nice guy. But it was....it was...it was a shame. And...and I guarantee you they're still operating. Should...should never of bothered them.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....I know every Ranger in Texas according to Glenn Elliott, was brought in at one time or another. Were you part of the group when the slant oil drilling in Kilgore...

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I worked that from the beginning to end.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Tell us about it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I...they told me to go to Kilgore and check into a hotel over there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember which one?

LEWIS RIGLER: Nah it was a motel out there at the edge of town. I don't remember the name of it. And wait for orders and all of a sudden we started getting...they come in and we started setting up on those wells that they were gonna test. You see you know without me telling you that East Texas oil field was sort of like a tub and these illicit operators went to the edge, go down there and put that shunt in and go over and get the oil out. And I think the majors knew it for a long time and they just finally got tired of it. We went over there and got stung by mosquitoes and red bugs and stayed up nights and never did...they convicted one man. And finally reversed it. We were used as a tool that is all.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How long were you over there, on and off, I mean how long was you over there and how long....

LEWIS RIGLER: I'd say five or six months.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And the Rangers.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah, five or six months.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...

LEWIS RIGLER: You'd go over there and be over there a week. Then you'd get off a week and go back a week.

ROBERT NIEMAN: In your book you ah...during that period you talk about the number one man.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well that's what I was explaining. It...about the Captain. When the Captain wasn't there your number one man took over.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I done talked...okay. Ah...what about the Lone Star Steel strikes?

LEWIS RIGLER: Very tough. The first one I made was made in 1957. That one only went on, I don't think it went on over fort....less than forty days. They had a wild cat strike. The next one I believe happened in 1968 and went on until 1969. And I think it lasted 210 or 11 days or 207 days. Awful bad, awful dangerous. Ah... the people, I hate to say it, but the people in that part of the country in some ways are very ignorant. And ...and ah....and I could see, they had some just complaints. But what they were doing in my opinion, no had ever told me this, they were making shell casings for bombs that they were dropping on ah...Viet Nam I guess. And ah...would you turn that on. The steel strike...well, it was so dirty that they poisoned wells, they cut fences, they burned houses, they dynamited houses, ah...brothers fell out, fathers fell out with their sons ah...families were torn asunder and ah....but...but in my opinion...cause...in my opinion ah.. they were making these ah..casings to be used for bombs for the war. That was my opinion why they kept operating . And ah...they brought in people and put tents there. They lived in tents and they fed the people there. And that's what the strikers called scabs. And they were paying them and

there was people out there losing their homes and losing their cars and their wives saying we ain't got no money. And so it was a rugged, rugged time. And it 207 or 211 days to finally get it settled.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Were you there when they blew up the pipeline in Pittsburgh, they didn't mean to blow it up.

LEWIS RIGLER: That was...that happened on a Sunday in 1930...in 1957.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was there...how many steel strikes were there all together?

LEWIS RIGLER: Three. I only worked two. One of them was very short, second I think was 37 days and the last one was over 200 days. As far as I know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I want to...Lewis is there anything else in general that I...I haven't asked you about as the Rangers and what not that you'd like to make a comment on before we move on to the next section?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, the Rangers filled a unique place in Texas history for many, many years. And they performed admirably. I used to tell young Rangers when they came in that they'd be walking around in a dead man's shoes...boots, because somebody had already made their reputation for 'em. When you go out and arrest somebody and you tell 'em I'm Texas Ranger so and so and he comes right along. He comes along because of some...what somebody did for you many years ago. It's not...so you've got to do something to make it easier for the next guy.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did your...I would think you couldn't help but hardly put the chest out a little if you will, especially when you were out of state and somebody would say, that's a Texas Ranger.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well not necess...yeah, it...it...you know I still now after people bring their kids by here for me for to autograph something or give 'em a card or...or something...people...and...and...people from over the state call and come by and visit and ah...but I...I won't...I'll tell you this, I..I hope that I'm a very humble person. I men to be. And ah...I never...I just did what I knew how to do. And the...the...the thing about the Rangers was unique was they could do so much with what they had. they could lead people. They could get local people to help. We were...largely when I went in the Rangers and for many years this was more of a rural state. We didn't have big cities like San Antonio and Houston and Dallas and Ft. worth and El Paso and McAllen. And still today the Ranger in the rural area has an immense...he can do immense amount of good. But their losing it, there's no question.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What do you think about the ah..politic...politically correct Rangers we're getting?

LEWIS RIGLER: You mean ah...through political appoint...ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well political, there's obviously without calling names the article from the Texas Monthly from here a few months back.

LEWIS RIGLER: yeah...oh yea, well here's...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Where you've got people who have been made Rangers who obviously are not qualified...

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, you know that's right, but we...historically we had them made before that weren't qualified. So that's nothing new. My question is in my mind, will we be one day a myth. And we may be, the Rangers. Because they've got 'em tied down now on time, how many hours they can work. They've got 'em tied down with people who are not adequate. They're making the decisions in Austin which they don't know sheep shit about, you know. I don't...I'm

telling you they don't know. They don't know what the people feel out in Cook County or Montague County or Gregg County. Because they don't have the eyes and ears there that they used to have.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What's your feeling towards a Joaquin Jackson who says, here's my badge rather than draws the line in the sand so to speak.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I've known Joaquin a long time. He's a pretty good guitar player. But ah...I guarantee you, had Joaquin of been hungry he'd a never done it. You know. It's wonderful to have such high principals if you've already got a pension made in the job somewhere, you know. When I left the Rangers in '63 I could afford to leave even though I could have stayed two years because I was going to get social security retirement. If I wasn't going to get that I of had to work two more years.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was there an inner company ah...

LEWIS RIGLER: Rivalry?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Rivalry. Company B, Company A, Company E, so forth...

LEWIS RIGLER: No, the Rangers down in south Texas, under Allee, they sort of referred to us up in this country as drug store Rangers. Hung around drug stores drinking coffee. We didn't go and camp out and cook over a camp fire and ride a horse. We were a little different than they were. But we...don't misunderstand me, most everybody that I ever cam in contact with out of that Company were real nice to me. And I worked for Allee two or three times and he was very cordial.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well, a very dear friend of yours of course, Glenn Elliott, is an extremely dear friend of mine...

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Has made the statement to me one time, you can't com...sometimes compare Company B With Company E or what not, it's like comparing apples and oranges...

LEWIS RIGLER: You couldn't do it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: We had different terrain, we had different ah..you in south Texas they had a lot of Mexicans and up in Amarillo they had different...different situations.

LEWIS RIGLER: Now you..yeah...more...well, Company E..of F...Company F, at one time that was headquarters company in Austin. And then they moved it to Waco. Company F was a lot like Company B. Because Company B... Mitchell went to Waco as a Captain of Company F, so naturally it became more like Company B. Ah...Arthur Hill...ah...no...James Riddle was a Ranger at Breckenridge when that was a part of Company B, he later became Captain at Midland and it became a little bit like Company B. Company C in Lubbock ah...Crowder went there in 1948 as Captain and of course Company C became a little bit like Company B. And ah...so I'd say...and then Jack Dean, he was in...he was...he never was in Company B, but Jack Dean was a State Trooper. he became Captain in San Antonio and it was a little bit like Company B.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...what was...what does it mean to you now to have been a Ranger?

LEWIS RIGLER: Now?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Now.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I look back on it with a great deal of pride, you know. I...I was...I was very, very grateful for the...I don't...I...I think I deserved to be in Company B. I think I was qualified to be a Ranger. I think I served with ah...success. Ah...I...I don't fell like I was put upon. I knew what the Rangers was making in money when I went to work, so...I...I..looking back on it I...I wouldn't want to do it again under these circumstances. And ah...unless you had some particular talent you never were gonna get rich ah...unless somebody left you some money.

You know my first wife was a registered nurse, she worked. My second wife when we got married she went to work out here at the State School and I helped her go through college and she would up an Assistant Superintendent of Texas...that old Texas Youth Commission at this school out here. She was an Assistant Superintendent. So they both helped. If you'll open that door over there, nobody's here now, it'll help us with the air conditioning.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...you referred in a letter to Glenn Elliott, "the Great Burkes"...

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh well you know I...

ROBERT NIEMAN: I...I...I know that's being scarseastic...did Burkes have...who was Burkes and what did he have against you?

LEWIS RIGLER: I don't know in this...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Who was he?

LEWIS RIGLER: I want to couch it this way, I don't know, Burkes was a...was a complex individual I guess. I met him when he was a...a Sergeant in the Highway Patrol. He had lots of ability. And ah...I, you know, this is going down in history and I don't want to bad mouth him. He was...he was just not my type of people, and I don't think he was qualified to be a...a Ranger Captain.

ROBERT NIEMAN: All right. Ah...before we move on to the next section, Glenn asked me to ask you about...just to mention to you something about a Ducenberg?

LEWIS RIGLER: A Ducenberg?

ROBERT NIEMAN: An automobile, maybe he's got that confused with something. Ah...I want to ask you now about individuals.

LEWIS RIGLER: All right, let me use the restroom and I'll be right with you.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. About individuals.

LEWIS RIGLER: Okay.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...most of them you knew, but first of all ah...you've said you studied Ranger history...

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: After you became a Ranger. Did the influence of a Rip Ford or J.C. Hayes or Lee McNelly or...

LEWIS RIGLER: There's no...they had nothing to do with it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah..ones that did.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...if you're comfortable...ah...start with Tom Hickman, Captain Tom Hickman.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, I knew Tom from 1942 or '43, I got to know him real well after I came to Gainesville. And he and I were great friends and ah...I set with him the night he died. And ah...he wa...he was a dear friend of mine. And ah...can you turn that off just a second. I didn't know Tom...he was...he was...he got to a special Ranger's commission after I got to know him and then he was appointed a...a commissioner of the Department of Public Safety by Allen Shivers. And I took him to all of the ah...commission meetings through the years that he was ...and he would up as chairman of the public Safety Commission of the DPS. And ah...he was a real good friend of ah...Homer Garrison. And ah...Tom was a complex individual. Had many personalities. But ah...to show you how he was, he had some trouble and ah...I was going to Austin, he said, would you take me to Scott and White hospital, they want me to go down there for a check up. And I said, yeah I've got to go down there and teach, and I'll be down there, Ill take you down today and you stay there tonight and tomorrow they do tests and...and I'm gonna

spend the night and they'll have the results of your tests the next day. So I came up there and went in and he said, I told the doctor I'd...want...I didn't want to see him til I talked to you, and he...you'd be with me when he came in. So he came in and he said, I'll tell you Captain, said, you've got cancer of the prostate. And said, it's rather advanced and said ah...the treatment now for it is that you are castrated and you take female hormones. And so we got in the car and we called home and he laughed and he said, well I'm gonna have my balls in a ...in a little bag I believe that's made out of buckskin or something, and if an officer stops me said, I'll tell you, I've got my balls they're right here in this sack. Well, he came home and he never mentioned it again. Somebody would say, what's the trouble and he'd say, well a horse kicked me here. And he never mentioned the cancer again and he fought the fight for maybe two or three years. And he quite taking the hormones because it made his breasts swell. And I guess he died in '72 at the age of 75 years. I believe he was born in '86 ah...and he died in '72 I believe.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever talk about his career to you?

LEWIS RIGLER: Ah..yeah, a lot. But you see in 13 years ah...just to tell you the damn truth there wasn't a hell of a lot to talk about. And Tom was more of a show man. he was a rodeo judge and he went to Europe twice in that time to judge rodeos. And he went to Madison Square Garden to judge rodeos. He claimed he had vacations you know and ah...hell of a PR man and ah...he...he worked on the Santa Claus bank robbery over on I believe in Eastland, you remember....

ROBERT NIEMAN: No...no I'm not familiar with it. Tell us about the Santa...

LEWIS RIGLER: You've heard that?

BILL UTSMAN: Yes sir.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well a bunch of tough guys over there they decided they'd rob the bank and had a guy dressed as Santa Claus. And he went in the bank and...and the kids was following him and everything, and they had a hell of a shoot out there. And and...they chased those guys around over in that area. They got lost, they...they chased 'em around quite a few days and finally caught all of them. And had 'em in jail there and...and...they...they over powered the jailer and killed the jailer. And they caught him and brought him back there and they broke into the jail and took him out and hung him. And ah...they're fixing to make a movie out of it I believe. I think A. C. Green wrote the story and it's been around a long time and nobody ever fooled with it, but I believe now they're going to make a movie.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...Homer Garrison?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, Homer was one of the most...I would put him down as administrator as an individual and as a law enforcement officer and as a politician, I'd put him at the top. Absolutely the tops. Absolutely. Great man, great leader, clean man.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you ever have any personal relations with him?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh, had a lot of personal relations with him. He and I had...well...he was a Rotarian and I was a Rotarian and I had him up here to speak to our Rotary club. And ah...he had me down to speak to his Rotary club as I remember. And ah...he knew I knew Tom Hickman well and...and ah...ah...let's face it, I knew what they knew in the DPS through Homer and on the way to a meeting I might start talking to him about it to Cap...and...and he made a good commissioner, you know. And Tom...ah Homer Garrison was just...just a super, super individual. I thought so highly of him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Frank Hamer?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I didn't know Frank that well. I knew Frank a..a..through Tom. And tom and I would...when we'd go to Austin to a meeting, we'd leave here in time to get to Austin to have lunch with Frank at the Stephen F. Austin Hotel. I didn't know him all that well. I did go to his funeral, took Tom to his funeral. For his day and time he was a hell of a man.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever speak of the...of course the killing of Bonnie and Clyde?

LEWIS RIGLER: No...not a word. Never.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah..Pat Spears?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, I..I liked Pat personally, ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Former...he's a former Colonel also.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes. I liked him personally. He was always kind to me. Of course he had a difficult time, he followed a great man. And there was lots of changes coming on.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Followed Garrison?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes. And ah...he was very kind to me and I think he did the best he could do. I don't have any ...and ...and he and I always got along. But I didn't have a relationship with him like I did with Homer Garrison.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...Captain Alley?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well...all I can tell you was, I heard a lot about his reputation, but two or three times I was sent down there to work during the ...in the '50's during the elections in Duvall County and around there, he was always very kind to me. And when I'd see him anywhere I...I...I think his reputation was little bit over blown as far as....

ROBERT NIEMAN: What was his reputation?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, being tough, mean and ah...short tempered. He was short tempered. I think history will show that. Ah...but I have nothing...nothing bad to say about him. He never was anything but kind to me.

(there is a pause or break in the tape at this point and it picks up Ranger Rigler)

LEWIS RIGLER: One of the finest guys I ever knew. Lester went to work for the DPS two months after I did. He was raised over here at Dennison, Texas. A poor boy and he lived in ah...when he went in to the service, or went to DPS, they sent him to Bryan. And he wanted to get back up in this country. His mother lived over at Dennison, and his wife's people lived at Dennison. And it was before March of '48 he transferred to Gainesville. And I'd know him before, but he and I became very close friends and ah... he worked with me a lot, just cause he liked criminal work. And he was real good help. And Joe Fletcher was Assistant Director and Joe could fly the departmental plane, one of those small planes. And Joe's brother lived at Muncer, he was a postal employee doing a route. Joe was raised up here at Marysville in the northwest part of Cook County. He was Assistant Director and he used to fly up here and I'd meet him at the airport and bring him in that night and he'd take my car and go out and spend the night with his brother. And the next morning he'd come in and we'd meet at the old Turner Hotel and had coffee. So I told Lester I said, Lester you meet me in the morning at the Turner Hotel at 9:00 and go have break...ah...coffee with Joe Fletcher. So we got in the car and we started to the airport and I was riding along and had Joyce in the front seat with me. And I said, Lester you've been wanting to get in the Rangers and you'd make 'em a good one, why don't you talk to Joe Fletcher here the Assistant Director. Lester sort of says, bu...bu...yeah...said...said...yeah, Colonel I..I had been wanting to get in the Rangers. Colonel said, well I never have seen any letters from you. He said, Colonel you know if you write a letter and the Highway Patrol finds out about it

said, you on the shit list. Which is true. So Joe said, well you write a letter to me, mark it personal. So we let him out at the airport and Lester said, Lewis, by... by God said, you've got to help me write that letter. So we went back to my office, it was at the hotel, and I wrote his letter for him and he signed it and we mailed it to Joe and six weeks he was a Ranger in Austin. And then in 1958 I guess, he transferred to Dallas as a Ranger Sergeant and was there until he retired ah... see he was almost a year older than I and he worked until he was 65. I think I retire...I retired in '77, I guess he retired in '79 or...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he stutter?

LEWIS RIGLER: Little bit, had a little speech impediment.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You mentioned there...was there animosity or...between the Rangers and HPD?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well not in later years probably. But those old Ranger Captains if they found out you wanted to leave the Highway Patrol and go in the Rangers you...you...you were...you know you were gonna be on the bad list.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...Bob Crowder, was he not from Minden, Texas?

LEWIS RIGLER: He was raised over in a little town over in that area. Very fine fella, real good Ranger. Ah...had a good way to get along with people. Looked the part, about 6'2" or 3", weighed about 200 pounds. Loved to play poker. And ah...just a delightful guy to be around.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How...how did he work with his men ah...

LEWIS RIGLER: Excellent, excellent. He had a rule and Crowder had a ru...ah...Crowder had a rule and Gonzauillas had a rule that if they came in your territory on a case you were in charge, you rant the show. They had to come....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Hands off type leadership?

LEWIS RIGLER: That's right. He left you alone.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you ever doubt though that if you had problems Crowder was behind you?

LEWIS RIGLER: Never had a doubt. In fact I'll tell you about Crowder. Crowder had worked with a man that I won't call his name, was Sheriff here. And he...he...this man had been a Constable where he knew Crowder. And they were friends. And they belonged to the same Church, same Church faith. And this Sheriff for some reason decided he didn't want me in this county. And he wanted...I heard that he told people he was going to get rid of me, get me moved, transferred out. And he told 'em he said, he's a gambler, which was a lie, I never gambled. And I was a woman chaser and he was going to catch me in a motel with a woman. So one morning I saw him and I went in his office and I told him I said, I heard you wanted to get rid of me, get me out of your county, out of this county. Yes, said I do. And I said, well how you gonna do it, through Bob Crowder. Said, well he figured he would. And I said, let me call Bob Crowder. And ah...so I called Bob and I said, bob this Sheriff up here wants to see you, he wants to get me transferred out of his county and I want to bring him down there. He said, well come on. So we went down there and visited about...until about...we got there about 10:30 and 11:15 I...he said, well come on Sheriff you and I'll go have lunch. and he said, Ernest you go with Lewis. So the Sheriff walked on...on out and Bob come back in and said, what's...what's the matter with that crazy bastard. And I said, well he wants me out of his county. he said, he'll never get that done. So they cam back and we went out and sat down in the car and the Sheriff throwed out his arm...his hand, said I want to apologize to you. Said, I'm wrong. And ah...so he wasn't back up here 30 days until he said he was going to get rid of me some other way, but he never did. Bob

was 100% behind you, had no problems at all. He was a dear friend, he was...he...he was...he was very tender hearted. And ah...just...just a fine fella.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...Bob Mitchell?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I think a lot of Bob. Bob came on, of course I can't remember the year he came in the Rangers. I guess he came in...Bob...some...he had to come in sometime probably in the early '60's. Bob...into Company B. And went to Tyler. And ah...he...he's a delightful friend and a good Ranger and a good officer. I worked with him at Lone Star Steel and I believe I worked...let's see...I don't know whether he was at slant hole or not. I know he was at Lone Star Steel, at the big strike. He wasn't there the first time, but he was there the second time. Bob was very knowledgeable. Had the ability to lead people. Had the ability to make you feel important, you know. Just a fine gentleman. I have nothing but praise for him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...Jay Banks?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh, Jay Banks and I went back so far, we went back so far as '45. Banks was in the service during World War I...II rather and ah...I was on a patrol at Grand Prairie and he was on a patrol at Denton and then we went in the Ranger service the same day. And worked in Company B until he made Sergeant I guess in '54. He was my Sergeant until he made Captain. And he was my Captain until he left in 1960...'60 is when he left. And the years he was retired he was a dear, dear friend. And ah...he was always 100% behind me and I was always 100% with him. And at his death at Austin I gave the eulogy, the same day I gave the eulogy for him and Lester at the same time. Just a real good friend. He had a...he had a lot of detractors ah...he wasn't a polished ah...politician I'd say.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was he a headline grabber?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well he didn't dodge it. He wasn't as good at it as Clint Peoples. Clint had him skunked.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well tell us about Clint Peoples.

LEWIS RIGLER: Fine friend. Thought a lot of Clint. Didn't...he probably did more in modern day times, he probably was second to Homer Garrison of the Rangers. (there was a blank in the tape at this point) ...knowing what legislators would do. he didn't mind calling on them. And he got a lot of things done for the Rangers. And if he'd of stayed there he'd still be getting it done. He was that tough and tenacious and he wasn't bashful. he knew where...he knew where all the bodies was buried. And he is a good friend of mine and I did his eulogy, not only at the Ranger Hall of Fame but I did his eulogy at the big Baptist Church, Columbia Street Baptist Church in Waco. And...and I can't...I'm...he had his faults. He liked publicity. But he...he did a world for the Rangers and he always took us along for the ride. Damn...I have nothing but great praise for him. A lot of people were jealous of him and probably rightfully so. But you take a guy like me that didn't want to be a captain, didn't want to be a Sergeant, didn't want to be anywhere but in Gainesville, Texas, he was perfect for me.

ROBERT NIEMAN: He's buried in Waco?

LEWIS RIGLER: Buried in Waco. Buried just south of Waco.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...what about ah...ah...Crowder, do you know where he's buried?

LEWIS RIGLER: Crowder is buried in Dallas, out there at that ah..cemetery, I can't think of the name of it. Ernest is buried there too. It's a big cemetery out there off of ah...635 up towards Richardson.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what about Hickman?

LEWIS RIGLER: Hickman's buried out here.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Tell us about Ernest Daniel.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well Ernest ah...you know I...he...he was a...he was a guy that never sought any glory, never sought any advancement, he was a good loyal kind friend. He was born over in Henderson County. At an early age moved out to Taylor County close to Abilene and sometime in the late '20's he went to California and worked...and I don't know who he worked for...as a deputy. He came back to that area and right along about '30, '29 or '30 maybe as early as '28, he became a city policeman in Abilene, and that's where he met and married his wife. And he was a member of the second highway patrol school in 1931. The first school was in 1930. And he got out and was stationed at Eastland on a motorcycle. And he went in the Rangers in '37, he was first at Ft. Worth and then to Dallas. And that's where he was until he retired in 1969, at the age of 69. And ah...he and I maintained a relationship all those years. And we traveled together, we slept together, we worked together, he always left all the decisions up to me. He never made a decision. And Lester Robertson was the same way. Ah..he..I'm..I made all the decisions. I'd said, Lester your the Sergeant...yeah, Rigler but god dern you've been here longer than me you know, you...you say what we're gonna do. Ernest was the same way. And I talked to him every other Sunday, I called him at his home and...and I truly, truly thought the world of him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Bob Goss?

LEWIS RIGLER: Didn't know him that well. Anything I know about him was...

ROBERT NIEMAN: What...you made a statement to me on the phone...

LEWIS RIGLER: He had no conscience, that's what I've been told. In think he told you that. He no conscience. That's what...that's what Crowder...that's what he said about him. I didn't say that. That's what I heard.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You'd heard that he was the most dangerous man that...

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I'd heard that he was dangerous, but I also heard that about Charlie Miller. And I worked with Charlie Miller and Charlie Miller wasn't dangerous. I also heard that about Gonzauillas and Gonzauillas wasn't dangerous. I also heard it about Hickman and Hickman wasn't dangerous. So I want to eliminate everybody but Goss, who I didn't know except I just met him that one time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Yeah. let's talk about Gonzauillas.

LEWIS RIGLER: One of the fine friends I had in my life. He took me and put me in the Rangers and I learned a lot from him. Wasn't so much what he did, it's what he didn't do. When I went to work for him he said, Lewis you've got a good head and you can learn a lot and you know a lot and said, you go up there to Gainesville and said, you run your business and said, if you ever shoot anybody don't say nothing to nobody, just call me and don't say anything til I get there. And ah...he didn't believe in having a lot of company meetings. We met maybe once or twice a year. he asked me if I could read and write the English language and understand. And I said, yeah and he said, well I'll either call you and tell you over the phone or put it in the mail. he was easy to work for. No problems. And very, very intelligent man, very intelligent. Ah...didn't have much education. Carried a dictionary with him all the time. Looked up words and learned a lot.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You traveled a lot with him ah...I understand that ah...if ah...him and his men were somewhere he...

LEWIS RIGLER: He was the last one to go to bed and the last one to eat. Absolutely.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...you...you'd talked about one time that ah...the consolidated...in 1946 the consolidated aircraft plant strike...

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah, he made them son-of-a-guns....they'd throw nails all over the road and he got up on the back of a state bonded truck and told 'em said, there's some brooms here said, ya'll get them, clean up them nails. And there was a thousand or more people there and they damn sure swept 'em up.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Gonzauillas had the ah...of course the reputation of a ...of a crack shot. Did you ever see him shoot?

LEWIS RIGLER: Never saw him shoot. Never saw him shoot. Never did see anybody that saw him shoot. Hickman never saw him shoot. In all the years I was around him I never saw him shoot. I'm sure he was a good shot, but he didn't...he didn't flaunt it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Goss one time said, of course Goss worked with him for years over in the oil field...

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And then up here at Herman...or I'm sorry Dennison, and Goss of course there's no question of his ability, ah...he was state...Texas state champion six years in the running and probably, according to Glenn Elliott, probably the greatest pistol shot that's ever been a Texas Ranger.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well ah...I'll go back a little bit. Hickman was a great shot. He won the national title at Springfield, Ohio with the...with the rifle, in 1918.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well...Hick...Goss' was a han...was a hand gun he won his...

LEWIS RIGLER: Hand gun yeah..

ROBERT NIEMAN: And Goss one time made the statement to his nephew, whom I've spoken to, said that Gonzauillas he guessed was all right in close to 15 -20 ft. You get him much over that he wasn't so swift.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well it could of been. I wouldn't know because we never mentioned...we mentioned ah..shooting. Never came up.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about he...the legend over where we live is that he killed 75 men.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I'll tell you what. I researched that pretty well. He killed an old Justice of the Peace in Beaumont, Texas serving a federal warrant. And when you're serving a federal warrant the federal's has got to defend you. And they tried him in Sherman, Texas and he was defended by a man that was later a District Judge, Bryant was the name, who was later district...a Federal Judge. And they tried him in...in Sherman and he bet the case. And then he killed a man at Longview ah...and I..I've got it in my notes and I remember when he killed him...

ROBERT NIEMAN: It was February '43.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah....

ROBERT NIEMAN: In Gladewater.

LEWIS RIGLER: He killed him...yeah. I was ...I remember the morning after he got....and...and he killed him. Well that's ah...two isn't it? And I worked with the man and Bob worked him and Hickman worked with him and I asked Hickman I said, you know I said, how 'bout all those rumors. He said, I just know of two. You know one thing about those deals, you see you put the fear into people if you think somebody's out here that's a hell of a pistol shot and meaner than hell. And how can you stop a rumor. I'm going to give ya for instance. I hadn't been here very long, and there used to be a cafe here called White Rose Cafe, it stayed open all night. And I was driving in from Austin and I didn't stop to eat. And I got in here a little after midnight and stopped at the White Rose Cafe and there was a bunch of drunks in there. And one of the two of 'em started making snide remarks about me and I decided by god I wasn't going to take it. So I was gonna arrest 'em and a fight broke out. And there was three of them and one of 'em I

hit him first and he didn't do anything further. And the other two it took me a little doing but I finally...they was drunk and I wasn't. And I was fighting for my life and I whipped 'em up and somebody said, you gonna call the police. I said, hell no I'm going home and go to bed. So from that the story got around about me whipping four and six and seven and nine, and finally one old boy was telling it one day, said, you know I remember when they said, told that guy was there and said, Lewis Rigler whipped four of them son-bitches. I said, it's a damn lie, it was nine. I got to where I...but that was my reputation around here. I hadn't been here a year and here I'd done whipped three to nine people you know. And it made.... and I could get out here and write it in chalk that it was a damn lie. And then they enlarged on it and said, you know after you whipped 'em you didn't even put 'em in jail. So that was...Gonzaullas...it was...there you get back to the mystique. You know, you get back to it with Charlie. You get back to it with...with... with ah... Banks. You get back to it with Gonzaullas. Banks so far as I know killed one man by himself and then killed two others, you know. Andand ...Gene Paul Norris killed him in Tarrant County.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well Gonzaullas ah...did you continue your relationship with him....

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh, yes you bet.

ROBERT NIEMAN: After he left the Rangers.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes. Ever...I...I...see in those days after you left, if you had...if you had company meetings ... it was good to have them in East Texas. Somebody...the Sheriff over there would have a company...the officers would go and we'd have a bar-b-que or something. And I'd always go by and...and...and after Ernest retired, I always picked up Ernest and Gonzaullas and took them. And I maintained a relationship with Gonzaullas until his death.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever talk much about his days there in '31, '32 over in Longview?

LEWIS RIGLER: Never did. Never did. Just never came up. I knew more about it from Hickman than I ever did him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was ah...like this...the famous Lone Wolf's trout line?

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...yeah. And...and him and Hickman and...and...ah...and Frank Hamer, they did the same thing a Mexia. And also at Borger, there where the boom towns were. And ah...so that wasn't the first time that Gonzauillas had ever been involved.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you ever hear Gonzauillas say anything about the race problem they had up in Sherman where...

LEWIS RIGLER: That was...that was something that was never mentioned. I never heard him say a word about it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you fill us in on the details of what you knew of it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well the thing about it is they was...had a black man I think they had him charged with rape.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Of a white woman?

LEWIS RIGLER: Of a white woman. And..and..and ah..they were having some trouble up there and ah..and Hamer went and I don't know that Gonzauillas was there, he might have been.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I believe he was.

LEWIS RIGLER: He could have been. But anyway, the mob came and..and..ah..I believe the story goes that Frank Hamer gave this black man a..a bucket of water and locked him in a safe. A big walk in safe. And the mob set the courthouse on fire and then took hatchets and knives and cut the water hose. And then after it cooled down they got his body and drug him around town. Now that's...that happened about 1933 I guess before I, you know...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well this would also have been before your time about the...when the ah...the bridge incident in Dennison.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well Dennison and Wichita Falls and that came up over the toll bridges because Oklahoma built.... well Oklahoma actually...under the law Oklahoma owns everything to the river. They go to the south bank of the Red River. And they built a free bridge. And they had a toll bridge here and a toll bridge in Wichita Falls and a toll bridge in Dennison. And so the powers that be, the people that had the money in the toll bridges damn sure didn't want a free bridge. And ah...that's what it was all about.

ROBERT NIEMAN: One of the humorous stories I've read about General Sterling....

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah Ross.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...yeah Ross. Was up at ah..ah..Dennison. And Gonzauillas was there and Goss was there and they had been squared off against the Oklahoma law enforcement agents, and they finally had Goss go out and start to set up playing cards. And he steps back with his .45 and starts shooting the cards into. And ah...Ross sends word to Oklahoma said, yeah Bob's one of our new boys we're just breaking him in.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well see I'd never heard that. Tom was over there, I remember him talking about it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Any other things you'd like to add on Gonzauillas? Or anyone?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I can say this about Gonzauillas. He was a very gentle, caring man. In later years he was quite a religious man. He..I believe he was...and he served on the board at the hospital in Dallas...ah...what was the Gaston Avenue hospital. Ah...he had no children. As far as I know he didn't have any kin folks. He referred to us in the Ranger company as his boys. And ah...he cared about you, you know. I was sick here in 1972, looked like I was going to die, and

he was already...had failing eye sight, and Ernest brought him to my house to see me. And ah...Cap and I hugged on the porch and we both cried you know, I figured that was the last time I'd ever see him. And he figured maybe that was the last time he'd ever see me. Had a dear, close relationship, you know. It was more....not like Captain and Ranger, it was more of a... in later years it was a...it was a great respect, and great admiration and a very kind spot in my heart for him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I guess at closing I got to touch on both of us great friend...

LEWIS RIGLER: Who?

LEWIS RIGLER: Glenn Elliott.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I....well you know Glenn, when I first knew him was the first strike in 1957, I got acquainted with him. I...as far as I know that was the first time. And I found out he wanted to be a Ranger and...and...I'd work with him some and I sort of liked the way he acted and...and ah...so let's say this, I became a champion ofof....of Glenn. He and maybe Jim Ray and ah...one or two more. And that was in the days when I don't know whether they had examinations then or not, it didn't make a damn if you had an examination, if you had somebody you wanted you was gonna get 'em. So we wanted Glenn and we got him. And Glenn, of course Glenn was younger than I was. He came in the Rangers I guess in '60, I may be wrong he might of came in '61. But I'd been in the Rangers 14 years when he came in and ...and ah ...I never did go tell one of the young Rangers you do this or you do that. If he asked me I told him. And I tried to conduct myself in such a manner that ah...that ah...they would maybe see that...that you wasn't supposed to be swaggering around throwing your hat up in the air, you know. Sort of under play it. I'll never forget, man told me one time said, Rigler why don't you dress like a Ranger. And I said, I'll tell you what, you teach me how to dress like a Ranger and I'll teach you

how act like one. He'll tell you that. We got a big laugh out of it. But I think a lot of Glenn. Glenn...Glenn's...was a hell of a Ranger, covered a lot of territory, worked a lot of hours.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well I want to close on what something Captain Carl Weathers told me down at Waco at the fish fry.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: We were standing there and Glenn was over visiting, I think him and Maxwell...Max were talking or something, and Captain Weathers said, there's Glenn Elliott, he said there's never been a Ranger who should have been a Captain that wasn't as much as Glenn Elliott, and the only reason he was never a Ranger Captain was because he didn't want to be.

LEWIS RIGLER: That's right. Well you know I had a chance several times ah...to go up, but I had the ideal place. And I knew that one day I wasn't going to be a Ranger. And ah...I was poor a lot of years of my life. I was raised poor and it was always my ambition to be well off. And I thought if I could build a base in Gainesville and know people, it might happen. And you see the car lot over there, this business here, and I own part of a bank out here and I'm on the board of directors, and ah...I've been successful in business, I'm very happy about it, I didn't want to be a Captain. I don't have the ability to order people. If I'd of been the Captain, I'd of had to fire Red Arnold. And he should of been. Is the tape going, turn it off. He came in 1960 and the Company B was...was a...Frank, turn it off a minute, it'll come to me. There was a young man, he was younger than I. Frank Kemp, I...I...I got acquainted with him really when he became a Ranger at Paris in 1960. And he was a dear friend as I ever had. And I didn't know until he died that he patterned so much of his career on me, from what he got from me. I told him when he came on, he said give me some advice. He said, I'm new in this business, said give me some advice. And I said, the first thing is, don't ever take anyone's life unless you feel like you can live it. If you

feel like you can live with it then you possibly can do it. But if you can't live with it, don't do it. And I found out after his death, his minister told me that I was his mentor, which is a great deal. And I did his eulogy at the funeral at a Paris, Texas and also at the Ranger Hall of Fame. Dear, dear friend. A good Ranger, a good man, I just...I...I...he was just, just such a fine fella. And I think he was probably nine or ten years younger than I. But a hell of a guy. Hell of a guy. And worked with him over at the Lone Star Steel strike there in '69, '68. Worked a lot with him. Never...I worked with him...I was working with him the day they opened up the LBJ Library in Austin. He and I worked together and spent the night together at Aus...at Georgetown, we couldn't get a room in Austin. And ah...I started to leave that morning, I was going to meet him in Dallas, and a big red yellowjacket stung me in my hand right there. And by the time I got to Waco my hand was throbbing like everything. And we stopped down there and I got a...went into a cafe and they gave me some ice and a bucket. But that thing hurt the whole time we was gone. And when I got back and went to the doctor, he cut the stinger out. The stinger hung in there. But Frank was very kind to me and ah...every time I ever went any where with him just...you know...you got to travel with a guy to know him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Right

LEWIS RIGLER: You know, just top drawer people, top drawer. Wonderful fella. You see Ernest Daniel was the last of the 30 model Ranger. There ain't...there's no more Rangers living that were 30 model Rangers, in my opinion. And I think I'm right. Now there's a few 40 models left. There's Denson and Roach, if Roach hadn't died in the last three or four weeks. Jel Rogers probably, let's see..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Jim Ray come in....

LEWIS RIGLER: Jim Ray come inI'm trying to get it in my mind...I would imagine he's a 40 model. I'd imagine that he's a 40 model. But there's not many 40 models left. Ah...probably five and ah...of those five that's left, you couldn't ta...you wouldn't have much luck talking to Jim Ray. I like Jim, but maybe he's not as verbal and open as I am. And that's just my judgment, I don't know , he might be more open. But he's a dear friend, I've known him a long time. I think a lot of him. He was on the patrol at McKinney when I was on the patrol at Grand Prairie. And his older brother, H. E. Ray, was ...was a patrolman when I went to work, he was stationed at ah...Sulphur Springs. Later stationed at ah...first town out of Dallas on highway, old highway 80....he was later stationed there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mesquite?

LEWIS RIGLER: No. It was a bigger town, it's ah....Terrell.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Terrell?

LEWIS RIGLER: And he was later Sheriff of ...of ...of Smith County. That's Jim Ray's older brother. And..and he and I had a good friendship. And Jim and I have a good friendship. Ah...Jim's rather a lonely person you know. He's bitter, his wife died and ah...and a lotshe had a will and ...and ah...she left everything to somebody else, her sister. I think a lot of Jim, very lonely man. Has no children, you know. Has very few relatives.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Glenn says the great inspiration as far as get him into the law enforcement was, I'm sure an old friend of yours, Jim Reynolds?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes, Jim taught...Jim taught Glenn Elliott in school.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh hum

LEWIS RIGLER: Over here at a town between ah...it might have been Honey Grove, but I don't think it was.

ROBERT NIEMAN: No it's....

LEWIS RIGLER: A town that....that Glenn....Glenn's farm

ROBERT NIEMAN: It's right on the tip of my tongue but I can't think of the name of it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...yeah well we're gonna see cause I keep these things here for people that's got something on the tip of their tongue. You know. It won't take me long, I'll find it. Ah...I was over there, I went through ah...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well you mentioned in your letter here that maybe some time you and him could meet up there at his farm...

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah....I'd like to do that....yeah I told him...

ROBERT NIEMAN: And I...I told him I said, if ya'll do that I'd sure want to come along and bring this camera and set it up and set back.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...yeah ole...ole a...I told him I'd come. We'll meet over there one of these days. I guess he's pretty busy isn't he.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well he goes up there about two to three days every week.

LEWIS RIGLER: He does?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh hum. But you know Glenn, I think he's busier now than he was when he was a Ranger.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah well, hell I know Texas is in here cause I got to it two or three times. Here it is right here.. I just...this is it. Okay, we're going to see, we'll go over to Sherman, Bonham, ah..Petty, Honey Grove, Windham.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Windham, that's it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah...and ah...no ah...is Glenn still separated or do you know. Is he

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...he's... Lewis do you ever feel that sometimes that ah...the job, the high danger job that you're in, did it ever cause with other people...you've obviously got a wonderful marriage, but do you know of any, we're not going to call any names, but Rangers that because of the high stress of their job that it caused possibly marital problems or stress related illnesses with their spouses or

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh I...I tell ya'...ah..I would judge they were there but you know in your business, now you...we'll go back when I was married the first time. I would have to go to Galveston and stay two weeks to keep gambling down there. That was in the '50's. My...I had three kids in high school. My son here was a captain of the football team. I didn't get to see him play but two football games that whole year, that was in 1958. I didn't get to go to father's night or any of those things. Cause I was gone. And I...it didn't cause my first wife and I any problems but you...you were tempted ah...when you were away from home, you...you had easy access to relationships with females probably. A strong marriage didn't suffer. A weak marriage would suffer. Because a weak marriage the person would use that maybe. Ah...I saw more trouble insofar as the guy, when the wife wanted to be the Ranger, you know, Clint Peoples a dear friend of mine, but his wife I don't think she worried about him, she just was a greatshe was quite influential with him you know. Ah...and then my second marriage, ah...I was over in East Texas over 100 days in 1968 and '69, out of 211 days I was over there about 100 days. I married the second time in '63, I had five daughters still at home in '63....ah...I mean in '68 and ah...of course I'd call home maybe every day, every night. Or if I was working nights I'd call in the morning before my wife went to work. I think if any man's marriage, I'm sure my wife was worried a lot of times but it...it...and I worried about her. She was Assistant Superintendent of the Texas Youth Council out here and they had violent sons-of-bitches. She could of got killed

just as easy. So you know you...you..just whenever you left the house in the morning andand even boils over the other way now, when I leave the house in the morning, I don't know whether I'll ever see my wife again or not. Somebody could run over me, I could have a heart attack, somebody could run over her, so it...it'sif you want to let stress get to your ass, it'll get to it. You know. But I have the feeling that ah...that ah...it didn't hurt either one of my marriages. And ah.. Ernest Daniel, I was close to him, it didn't hurt his marriage. Ah...some of the guys that...that their marriages failed, they failed if the guy would have been picking cotton.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well I met...I was fortunate to meet Jim Riddle's wife in Waco.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah. She's a dear, dear woman.

ROBERT NIEMAN: She seemed to be a very strong

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh strong...see Jim Riddle and I went to work at the time, in 1942. And our bunks was next to each other. And ah...then he was in Company B at Breckenridge. And ah...he was at Graham first and then he went to Breckenridge and...and just a fine gentleman. But his wife was a strong person.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And Gonzauillas' wife of course was

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh strong, strong.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And I know Juanita Goss was a strong....

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh strong.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Strong woman.

LEWIS RIGLER: Gonza...Hickman's wife was strong, ah...I think Bob Mitchell's wife was strong. And Max Wommack's wife, I know her and he...he's another good one. I want to say a good word about Max Wommack. I think the world of Max Wommack. He was a hell of a good Ranger and a hell of a good friend. He had a son that died rather suddenly about six, seven, eight

years ago. I sat down and wrote him a letter of sympathy and he really...of course I did it because I was sympathetic, but it meant a great deal to Max you know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well we're planning on interviewing Max and we're also going to interview Max's sister, Dorothy. She was a survivor of the New London school explosion.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well when you interview ole' Max you tell him how much I think of him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You've got it. I want to do a little hop scotching here because we're about finished ah...you're ... Bill and I...Utsman here my...our assistant here and I's other major project is the New London school explosion. Ah..do you...I know you wasn't there but people of your age...

LEWIS RIGLER: Well you...

ROBERT NIEMAN: Universally remember...what do you remember that night...the radio.....

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I wasthat morning, it happened in the morning.

ROBERT NIEMAN: No sir...

LEWIS RIGLER: At noon?

ROBERT NIEMAN: No sir, it happened about 3:20 in the afternoon.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I remember just hearing about it. But you got to remember the day and the time. The day and the time you didn't have any TV, you see. TV changed the whole world. If you didn't have TV youwho would care a god damn about...about O. J. Simpson. So it didn't get...it was sad and it was bad, but you know it didn't get the...the deal that...that.. that it would have got now, you understand.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh huh.

LEWIS RIGLER: I remember it happening. I forget...I'm sorry I didn't get the time. But they got us, routed all us out and we were going to go over there from ah...San Antonio and they were

going to send the 15th field artillery and the 9th Infantry and they wound up sending the 9th Infantry, I didn't go. But I remember it. Ah...remember reading it in the paper, but ah...things didn't evolve then. You know ah...every little town didn't have a radio station. You know Gainesville didn't have a radio station. And there was a lot of radios, but there wasn't near as many radios then as there are now. I remember the first radio my grandmother got was in about '32. And ah...very few radios. Waco didn't have a radio station until '26. So the publicity wasn't there like it is now. And another thing in 1957, it wasn't half population in Texas that's here now. In 1921 the population of Texas was five million people. So I don't know what the population is now, probably thirty million. So, a lot of difference.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...I want to ask you two more...couple more questions about Gonzauillas. Ah...his inspiration when he joined the Rangers in 1920 in El Paso was Captain John Hughes, did you...Hughes lived to a very old age....

LEWIS RIGLER: I didn't know him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Did...did you ever hear Gonzauillas speak of Hughes?

LEWIS RIGLER: Never did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: His most frustrating case, the one he could never crack...

LEWIS RIGLER: Gonzauillas?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was the Texarkana phantom murder....

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yeah..yeah..that's right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever speak of that?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well he didn't have to speak of it because that was in '46 and I was working on special assignment in '46 in Rangers, but I wasn't at Texarkana, they had another big air...consolidated ah...airplane plant strike in Ft. Worth. And myself and my partner who was

Royce Calvert and Bob Crowder and George Roach, he was on special assignment, we worked that strike over there. I didn't go , we were over there at Ft. Worth for two or three months. So I didn't go...I didn't work those cases in Texarkana. But of course we talked about it and it just wasn't...they just never made a case.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...I just want to add this for the record so it never gets forgotten. Because it's kind of obscure now. Hardy Pervis, Sr. I guess.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yes

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was the Ranger in charge at New London school explosion.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah

ROBERT NIEMAN: I just wanted to put that on the tape..be on the record.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well you see, Hardy Pervis was the Chief Deputy Sheriff at Lufkin when Homer Garrison was a 18 year old deputy. Did you know that?

ROBERT NIEMAN: No I did not.

LEWIS RIGLER: All right. There was a tie there. Homer Garrison was a deputy at the age of 18 so far as I know and Hardy Pervis was a ...the...the a...Chief Deputy Sheriff and I guess that's Angelina County and I may be wrong. And that's where he and Hardy Pervis started. And of course Homer had a soft spot in his heart for Hardy. But Hardy got to be the Captain, and you've got to understand this , Captain's way back there had a lot of power. Because they were usually....they had politicians behind them. The Governor, the Senator and so forth. And the first thing you know they...they had a little kingdom. And that's the way Hardy Pervis was. And ah...Hardy wasn't very active. And he didn't believe in reports and he had two good Rangers, or several good Rangers, he had ah...Johnny Cleveland Hagan, Eddie Oliver, Mark Jones, ah....had...had quite a few good Rangers. But as far as I know they was all good. Old man Sid

Holiday. But he...he believed in just keeping everybody there unless you got a call to go somewhere, you didn't go looking for anything, you played dominos. And as long as he lived we never did get that gambling shut down in Galveston I'll tell you that. I'm not saying anything bad about him but just stating a fact.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah...did Gonzauillas ever say...he worked so many of the ah...he worked Kilgore, he worked Borger, he worked ah... Bradley's Corners, he worked Mexia, he worked Burke Burnett, he worked Ranger, did he ever say which one of those was the roughest towns?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well the one he...the one he spoke the most about was ah...the one over at Eastland because the Sheriff over there put him in jail. That's the one he spoke the most about. Tom Hickman delivered his check to him and the other Ranger that got put in jail over there, he delivered their checks in the jail.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Why did they get put in jail?

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh a trumped up charge. Grand jury no billed 'em and they throwed the Sheriff out of office.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...ah...finally he...back in those days it seemed like the...the Lone Wolf Gonzauillas' and the Bob Goss' and these guys, they were in and out of the Rangers like a yo-yo.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well they had to be.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And...and....

LEWIS RIGLER: They had to be. The Governor came along and through the Adjutant General throwed their asses out.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Gonzauillas was...twice served during the '20's in the probation...prohibition.

LEWIS RIGLER: That's right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You know....the Elliott Ness ...where Ness served.

LEWIS RIGLER: That's where he got his name Lone Wolf.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How did he get that name?

LEWIS RIGLER: I don't know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever talk about his Elliott Ness days I call 'em?

LEWIS RIGLER: Never did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What do you think of the ah...of the TV type ah..Chuck Norris ah...

LEWIS RIGLER: I've never watched it. I have no desire to watch it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Bill...Bill Utsman here with us ah... Bill do you, or well let me ask this.

He served as a director or technical director...advisor....

LEWIS RIGLER: Gonzauillas?

ROBERT NIEMAN: On Tales of the Texas Rangers.

LEWIS RIGLER: He sure did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever talk about that?

LEWIS RIGLER: Well I was there when it started.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Oh well tell us about it.

LEWIS RIGLER: Well, he got acquainted with a guy in California, can't think of his name, his son is still active, and that's why Gonzauillas retired. He...he was going to develop this thing, Tales of the Texas Rangers, and I remember the day they brought the crew down to Dallas. And they were going to have him setting at the desk and making an opening statement. And the had the cameras set up and everything and they tried it about ten, fifteen, twenty minutes and he

couldn't get it out. He couldn't do it, he couldn't talk. Finally he said, you'll have to do it some other way, I can't do it. So they didn't ever use him sitting there at the desk.

ROBERT NIEMAN: A little bit camera shy.

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And that's kind of strange about Lone Wolf Gonzauillas.

LEWIS RIGLER: Yeah, Gonzauillas. If somebody...if it was something about somebody wanted to talk to him about something that he knew something about, maybe he could be verbal, but not on that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did...did you ever hear him speak as a legend...another person who followed the oil field around, was a woman. She became a legend in East Texas. Mattie Castleberry, Mattie's Ballroom, Mattie's Rio Palm Isle.

LEWIS RIGLER: No..

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Did you attend his funeral on February...he died on February 13, 1977?

LEWIS RIGLER: Gonzauillas?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh hum

LEWIS RIGLER: Oh yes.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah...where is he buried?

LEWIS RIGLER: Same place Crowder is. The same...same place that Ernest is buried.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Bob Goss died on March 5, 1978, did you....

LEWIS RIGLER: I didn't.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Ah... Bill Utsman do you have any questions?

BILL UTSMAN: No I don't, it's been covered very well.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Lewis, any other statements you'd like to make.

LEWIS RIGLER: Appreciate you coming. Hope you got what you need.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well I...I hope I got what I need and I hope that ah..this is satisfactory....

LEWIS RIGLER: Here's the thing about it, you asked me good questions and I tried to give you good answers. There's one thing on there, there's not any secret and I don't know why that Burkes...Burkes and I never had confrontation. And I doubt that he ever had a confrontation head up with Glenn Elliott. And Elliott for a long time was in his...you know. But I think he finally turned Glenn around. Ah...but ah...I don't....he was who he was and I'm not mad about it. If...if he...if he hadn't of been the Captain I might of worked two more years. And I got out and thank goodness I got out. Not that I was mad at the Rangers. I needed to go. When you're 63 years old you don't need to be there. But one thing they miss, the Department of Public Safety misses, and one thing that a lot of things miss, they miss the intelligence of people who were there. They don't keep 'em around as an advisory committee. They don't ever ask you what you think or what you think of work. And so they miss that. The FBI's done the same thing. And of course a lot that's going on now, not only goes on in the Rangers and the Department of Public Safety, goes on in the FBI. My youngest son, Eric Rigler, lives in San Antonio, he went with...he was in the Navy in...in the ah...Vietnam time, he was a pilot. He went through Pensacola in 1965 and he was discharged as a pilot from the Navy in 1971 and he entered the FBI in June of 1971. He was stationed in Omaha and then South Bend and finally McAllen. And because he was a pilot he wound up being a pilot for the FBI and they finally had six planes in San Antonio and he was in charge of their planes and pilots at San Antonio. And he retired May 31st at the age of 51. He said they don't run this son-of-a-bitch like I think it ought to be run. So he retired. And ah...of course he's...I want to say this...., it's sort of like Joaquin, he's got 21 years time with 'em and he

got a job working for the Texas Lottery Commission, it's not as stressful, he can be home every night and not have to do a lot...most he might be gone one night to Corpus or one night to McAllen. So...but he said he just got tired of looking up and they had quota's of this and quota's of that and ah...he said you couldn't ...you couldn't get anything done any more. So ah...we see it and it... let's just face it, the federal government has screwed up a lot of things, in my opinion. And they're gonna screw up a lot more. And may I add one more thing to it, when the health affair finally gets out you're going to be a sick son-of-a-bitch. That's a fact. Cause it ain't gonna do me and you and nobody else any good. It's gonna be government...it's gonna...it may be the final thing that destroys this land.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well..

LEWIS RIGLER: You know. But in my life time, through my work in the Rangers, I've got to meet a lot of fine people and ah...I really enjoyed it. There's a deal there, that was sent to me by Ralph Hall, you know Ralph.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh hum...yeah.

LEWIS RIGLER: He sent me the...I helped him up here and he sent me those uncirculated dollar bills fresh off the press. Congressman Hall, dear friend. Sam Rayburn, Ray Roberts was a great Congressman ah...that's the late Ray Roberts was named after him. he was a great friend of mine. Ah...so many of them were... were...were kind and decent to me and went out of their way to be friends of mine that's...I'm very appreciative. Is there anything else men? Delightful to have you in the big city.

ROBERT NIEMAN: It's been our pleasure. This will go down to Fort Fisher and it's been our pleasure.

LEWIS RIGLER: Okay. Thanks.