

INTERVIEW WITH

DWIGHT WATSON

(Close Personal Friend of Bob Goss, Texas Ranger)

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PROJECT:
BOB GOSS & THE TEXAS RANGERS

INTERVIEW CONDUCTED AT THE HOME OF
DWIGHT WATSON
KILGORE, TEXAS
TUESDAY - APRIL 16, 1996

INTERVIEWED BY:
ROBERT NIEMAN
LONGVIEW, TEXAS

E-Book Project Staff: Robert Nieman, Volunteer; Byron A. Johnson, Christina Stopka & Judy Shofner, Texas Ranger Hall of Fame and Museum staff.

Present At Interview: Dwight Watson, Thelma Watson, & Robert Nieman

Dwight Watson (Former Constable of Kilgore, Texas)
and close friend of Texas Ranger, Bob Goss



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ROBERT NIEMAN: This is Tuesday, April 16, 1996, my name is Robert Nieman. We are at Mr. Dwight Watson's home in Kilgore, Texas. The purpose of this interview is to discuss Texas Rangers and law enforcement in general and the career of Bob Goss in particular. Mr. Watson do I have your permission to record this interview?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yes sir.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mr. Watson, you understand that this videotape will belong to you, the Texas Ranger Research Library in Waco, Texas and to me?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yes sir.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And finally Mr. Watson, in addition to the Texas Ranger Hall of Fame Museum in Waco, Texas do I have permission to present copies of this tape to other various historical organizations such as museums, libraries, schools, and etc.?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yes sir, you sure do.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mr. Watson what is your full name and your address?

DWIGHT WATSON: Dwight Eugene Watson, 2806 (unintelligible)....Drive.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Kilgore, Texas?

DWIGHT WATSON: Kilgore, Texas.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Mr. Watson, when were you born?

DWIGHT WATSON: Born April 19, 1918.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And where?

DWIGHT WATSON: In Kilgore.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And your parents?

DWIGHT WATSON: There was Jim Watson and Stella Watson. They're buried out at Danville.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. Ah....do...ah....do you have any siblings and their
.....chronologically.....any brothers or sisters?

DWIGHT WATSON: I have one brother.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay.

DWIGHT WATSON: It's Bill Watson, Bill's up on Cedar Creek out of Maybank and he's six
years older than I am. He's still alive.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.....and your wife?

DWIGHT WATSON: Thelma Watson.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And is she from here in Kilgore also?

DWIGHT WATSON: She's from Kilgore.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....you were about 12 years old when Dad Joiner brought in the Daisy
Bradford #3.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yes sir.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember any of that?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not really, no sir.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember the boom times that went on here in downtown
Kilgore, the pictures we've all seen down at the Kilgore Oil Museum?

DWIGHT WATSON: I remember when they drilled in the Crim well you know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: The Lou Della Crim?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And also in 1930.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yes. See my father died inwhen I was six month old and my mother raised me, and I lived with my Aunt and Uncles around here a whole lot. And that's where I was living, with my Uncle, when they hit the Crim well.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember what it was like here for the next two or three, four years?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Just growing up in this area, would you explain some of that?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh just over night the town just filled up with everybody and it got awful bad around here, it was dangerous to go to town. People was hungry and they'd build them old shacks out of cardboard, anything, slab, anything they could get for protection. I think it rained every day seemed like. Yeah, the streets wasn't nothing but mud you know, it was terrible.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember the area known as "Happy Hollow?"

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And could you dwell on that any?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well thatthat....see Happy Hollow..... I'm trying to think.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: It's there where the library and the swimming pool is at today.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah. That's the library and the swimming pool and Mr. Elder made a park out of it after.....Happy Hollow that's where a bunch of them lived down in there, stayed in there. And then on out there where Kilgore High School is now, they called that "Slab City," cause a bunch of people built houses out of these slabs in these saw mills. I think the Elders had a sawmill here.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Is this the same Elder that Elderville is named after?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't really know. Cause these Elder's live here in Kilgore and ah.....they had a saw mill over in front of Kilgore High School, that's where they got all them slabs and things that they'd build houses and shacks and things.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well do you remember the area down here where the old Longview highway....Longview road crossed the railroad tracks, out here in the north part of town, where a place called Newton Flat was at?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you describe Newton's Flat?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well that....back when they had aa little old refinery in there, they'd called it the Rose Refinery, lake that crossed it....little old....crossed it.....Rabbit Creek down there and you crossed the railroad track and then there was a little old refinery called the Rose Refinery.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Is it on the right or the left, going towards Longview?

DWIGHT WATSON: On the left going to Longview. That road see comes on out over by the Danville Cemetery.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh huh, uh huh.

DWIGHT WATSON: That's where it comes out. And that's where my Uncle used to live, I lived most of the time with ah....on the right out there. Jim Birdsong and Annie Birdsong, that's who I was raised by.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well you mentioned that your parents are buried in Danville.

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Coincidentally I stopped by the Danville Cemetery today.

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....Sr., Barney Skipper, Sr. is buried there. Did you know old man Barney Skipper?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh, yeah remember him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well to me, he's kind of the....he's one of my heroes of that era because for what, twenty years here, people said, oh there's old crazy Barney claims there's oil inyou know, across the street keeps saying hello to him and then after the oil come in the (unintelligible).....number one he brought in all of a sudden he become that genius you know.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you have any remembrances of him?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not really, not really.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember when the Rangers first came into town?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not....see I was out there in the country, not really, not really. But later on I got to hearing about 'em and then run into 'em up town a little bit.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What was it like to go to school during this period here?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well it was pretty bad. We had to, you know, walk to school, it was pretty bad.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I remember I interviewed Beverly Tucker, Walter and Leota Tucker was her mom and dad, and it was her job to drive old Dad Joiner around when he was selling those leases over and over and over. And she relates the story that ah....when the Daisy Bradford come in her brother Joe jumped out the school window and the teacher hollering at him to come back, come back and said, he never went back to school a day in his life. But ah....what did you do, were you always in law enforcement or.....?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well no I first started out driving a truck here, East Texas....

ROBERT NIEMAN: East Texas?

DWIGHT WATSON:Motor Freight.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay.

DWIGHT WATSON: It belonged to a man from Kilgore, Ruben Crim, that's where I first started out and I drove a truck for Red Ball Motor Freight and I drove one for this Doc Ellerd truck's and I drove one for the railroad, Missouri Pacific. Then Iback in them days I got big enough, about 16 I think or 17, and I (unintelligible).....fire department, a volunteer fireman. And then a little later on there well I went to work for the fire department and I worked for the fire department there for quite some time. And then a policeman down there wanted to be a fireman and I wanted to be a policeman, so we talked to our Chief's and our Chief's said, we don't care and just change jobs. So we just changed jobs.

ROBERT NIEMAN: About when was this?

DWIGHT WATSON: Ah....that's '43. And a boy named Jake Hale is the one I changed jobs with. And then I worked for the city, I don't remember just how long, but then I went to work for Lonnie Smith, the Sheriff from Gregg County, and then I come back over here and worked for the Kilgore Police Department and then that's when I run for Constable in '46.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Against Bob Goss?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Want to go back ah.....to the '30's again, a couple other subjects I'd like to touch on. Did you know or ever hear of an old railroad bull, I think they called, by the name Texas Slim?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you know him?

DWIGHT WATSON: I did know him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.....what kind of reputation did he have?

DWIGHT WATSON: Pretty bad. He put the people off the train.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Remind me after this is over, Noble Crawford has quite a.....Texas Slim is the reason Noble Crawford came to Longview, I'll tell you that story when we get done.

DWIGHT WATSON: All right, okay.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Fortunately I did interview Noble before he passed away.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, I worked for Noble there twice.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you....when did you work for....

DWIGHT WATSON: That.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Go ahead.

DWIGHT WATSON: I didn't work for Noble, I worked for Lonnie twice.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When did you work....did you work for Lonnie in '43 by any chance?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, I was still on the police force then.

ROBERT NIEMAN: The reason I'm asking, there's a story that Gonzauillas, Lone Wolfe Gonzauillas, killed a man over in Gladewater in '43 and there's conflicting stories about the shooting and I didn't know if you may have been there or heard anything about that.

DWIGHT WATSON: No, no wasn't there. I don't hear any..... but I worked for Lonnie back when his Chief Deputy was Harry Lawson over there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you frequent Mattie's, the old ballroom, I'm not talking about out here on the old Longview/Kilgore highway?

DWIGHT WATSON: I've been there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you describe the building, as best you remember?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah. The best I remember it was just an old square looking barn and ah....of course it was fixed up inside quite a bit. And ah....the main door faced the west and it had a revolving mirror ball up in the ceiling that revolved and they had spot lights on it and it reflected all over the building. That's about the most I can remember.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about some of the other clubs ah....what was ah....I'm trying to think of the other lady, Edna Mathews?

DWIGHT WATSON: The Plantation?

ROBERT NIEMAN: She had the Plantation?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh, at one time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do you remember Edna?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah, I remember Edna.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I understand she was an extremely attractive lady.

DWIGHT WATSON: She really was, she really was. And a nice lady.

ROBERT NIEMAN: She was killed over in Bossier City I think?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Jealous boyfriend or something.

DWIGHT WATSON: Her boyfriend's supposed to of shot her and killed her. They tried him down at, I believe, Minden.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Louisiana or Texas?

DWIGHT WATSON: No it was ah.....they tried it in Louisiana.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well Minden, Louisiana is not far from Bossier City.

DWIGHT WATSON: Where's the county seat of Bossier?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.... I don't.....Bossier, is that Bossier Parish or is that Caddo Parish there?

DWIGHT WATSON: That's Bossier there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well I guess Bossier City. Well Menden is.....is the countyis the county..... I don't know if it's Bossier Parish's or not.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, that's the.....that would be the county seat. That's where they tried him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....so ah....any of the other clubs that you remember very well? I've done a lot of work on some of these old clubs, these old honk.....you remember like Honky Tonk City out here?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Where I-20 intersects what is it now, it's been 26, 259, I think it's 31 now.

DWIGHT WATSON: 31. 259 gets off there and gets up on.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Yeah, well they change it about every other year I think, something like that.

DWIGHT WATSON: I think there was about thirteen of those beer joints out there, wasn't nothing but beer joints, there wasn't nothing else. But they finally closed those, it was a traffic hazard, so they canceled all them licenses.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When did that happen?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't remember what year that was.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....do you remember....when did you first meet Bob Goss?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh I met Bob back when he was Chief of Police.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well he was Chief of Police here I think in

DWIGHT WATSON: '36?

ROBERT NIEMAN: '34, 5 and 6 .

DWIGHT WATSON: I think..... I think that's when I met Bob.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about Gonzauillas?

DWIGHT WATSON: I never did know him, I talked to him and spoke to him through John Robert Florence, he's an idol of John Robert Florence you know. And they lived with John Robert's grandmother when he was here and that's where I met him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did you ah..... I understand he lived there and Goss lived there and Leo Bishop, did you know Leo, another Ranger?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, I didn't.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Or Tom Hickman, Captain Hickman?

DWIGHT WATSON: It seemed like Hickman.....didn't he wear a little derby?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well he was a Captain.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, well I might of met him, I don't remember.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....well did you know Malcolm Crim?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What kind of man was Malcolm?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well Malcolm was.....Malcolm Crim was odd, he was odd. He smoked a corn cob pipe and he was interested in baseball you know and ah....he had some old habits. I think until the day he had his stroke some colored people out here on Henderson highway would make his soap for him, lye soap you know like they used to make. I'd carried him out there a

couple of times to get that. And ah.... I think he went to see his mother every day, every day until she passed away.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Another oil field character I bet you remember, Oil Field Willie?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Tell me about Oil Field Willie.

DWIGHT WATSON: Oil Field Willie.....Oil Field Willie.... used to be a place here called the Blackstone Cafe on the corner down there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Where was that located?

DWIGHT WATSON: It's ah.....you know where that Crim Mercantile ?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh hum.

DWIGHT WATSON: It was right on the corner, in the.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Closest to the railroad track or away?

DWIGHT WATSON: Towards the railroad track.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay.

DWIGHT WATSON: That's where all the roughnecks and everybody went you know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh huh.

DWIGHT WATSON: He said, "The people tell me I'm crazy", but said, "You don't see me (unintelligible).....the way I'm going to catch a ride to work do you". I'll tell you a joke on.....Leggett Crim was a friend of his, that's Malcolm's brother and he was up there one day and Leggett told him he said, "Man you need a new suit", he said, "Yeah I sure do". So Malcolm give him a hundred and told him to go down and get him a suit, down a Hurwitz, it was downstairs. So he went down there and told 'em he needed a new suit. They said, "Well what about it". And he said, "Well Leggett's going to pay for it". So they called Leggett up and said,

“You going to pay for this boy’s suit down here”. And he told ‘em yeah. He forgot to tell ‘em he’d already give Willie the money. Willie just bought the suit and charged it to him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well you remember, in 1941 Willie was killed?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh, in a car wreck.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I think he was.....way the story..... I understand the story is he was hitchhiking and he got run down.

DWIGHT WATSON: Well no, he was a riding with a fella by the name of Carl Frenchie.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Carl Frenchie?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, and they had an automobile accident and killed ‘em.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well most people around here, did they like old Oil Field Willie?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah, they’d run him for Railroad Commissioner.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And then Governor, Governor Willie.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, and he had him some cards printed and he’d pass ‘em out, he was politicking.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about some of the other characters of the ‘30’s?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well one of them characters named Judge Fields, you ever heard of him?

ROBERT NIEMAN: No I don’t believe I have.

DWIGHT WATSON: He was a drinking man, but he was an awful good lawyer they told me, but he was a drinking man. And the drunker he got the crookeder his hat came to be and you could tell how drunk he was seeing on the street by the way he was wearing his hat. And you’d have to know him to appreciate him, but he was a gentleman but he sure could drink.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What ah....during that period did you have any sense then of the tremendous history that was being built, that was being lived right then?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh no, I didn't.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You know Kilgore is the greatest boom town in history. It's bigger than Tombstone, bigger than Dodge City, bigger than Deadwood.

DWIGHT WATSON: I never had no idea it was going to be.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Do ah.....one other thing before we really get off on Goss, what do you remember, since you would of been about 19 at the time, about the explosion at New London in 1937 of the school?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't remember much except I was in the volunteer fire department and they called us out and we went down there, but we hadn't really got there they had a blockade or something down there, somebody stopped and said that there was a fire back in Kilgore, so we turned around and come back. And seemed like it was Smith Lumber Company burned. I neverdidn't ever go back any more.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you loseor did you know people well, intimately that lost people?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not back then, no.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How about since then, have you known.....?

DWIGHT WATSON: I've run into a few people since then that lost their children down there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: They still carry that real close to the surface.

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah, you know they tried to tear that monument down there down. Had a uprising about it, so they didn't tear it down.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well let's talk about Bob Goss some more. Ah....do you remember the incident ah....that ah....well let's just.....how did Goss dress? Just kind of cover the particulars of him.

DWIGHT WATSON: Well hekind of normal, always wore a big hat.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he wear shoes or boots, western wear?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh he wore boots and the rest of it just, you know.....in fact I never paid much attention to it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah....did he have any particular favorite type of sayings or you know, little old quirks?

DWIGHT WATSON: No not really, I don't remember any of 'em.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I remember I've heard the story that he always ate at the Streamliner.

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh he done that, yeah, drank beer.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Out of a metal malt cup.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, malt cup, yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was he....?

DWIGHT WATSON: That was every day, at about the same time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And he always set in the same place?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Where was that?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well it was where his back would be to the wall.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And did he usually vary his menu, did he eat the same thing every day or do you remember?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't remember, I'm sure he did, but I don't.....knowing him I'm sure he did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.....did he drink?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well not to excess, he drink all right though.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Beer, whiskey or both?

DWIGHT WATSON: Beer, mostly beer that I know of.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he smoke?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't remember Bob smoking.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he cuss?

DWIGHT WATSON: A little bit. He hated black people.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever say why?

DWIGHT WATSON: Never did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Now he had a black person that worked for him for years and years and years, his name was ah..... Nelson.....

DWIGHT WATSON: Nelson Johnson.

ROBERT NIEMAN:Nelson Johnson.

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he.....did he treat Nelson all right?

DWIGHT WATSON: Treated Nelson.....Nelson was his friend, he treated Nelson good.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did Bob ever talk to you about his youth?

DWIGHT WATSON: About his what?

ROBERT NIEMAN: His youth, when he was a young man?

DWIGHT WATSON: No he never did, no never did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....did he ever talk about his early Ranger days?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, not to me he didn't.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Like when he was up in Sherman at the race riot or Dennison at the bridge?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, never did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: One time he was supposedly of said.....and Gonzauillas said the same thing, that Kilgore was bad and Borger was a lot worse.

DWIGHT WATSON: Got to be bad then, cause Kilgore was at the beginning.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did he ever talk about Gonzauillas, Lone Wolf Gonzauillas?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not very much.

ROBERT NIEMAN: When he did, what would he say?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well he just never had much to say about him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he like him?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not....not really, he wasn't real fond of him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever.....

DWIGHT WATSON: I mean that's my recollection of it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever indicate why?

DWIGHT WATSON: Not really.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you ever hear him talk about say, Frank Hamer, the man that killed Bonnie and Clyde?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, not really.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Or Hardy Purvis, another.....

DWIGHT WATSON: Now Purvis I heard him mention him, I don't remember just the words, I remember the name.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....did he ever say how many men he killed?

DWIGHT WATSON: No he never mentioned that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he ever talk about any that he had shot?

DWIGHT WATSON: No.

ROBERT NIEMAN: For instance the thing.... I don't whether it happened or not, I've read that it did, where down there across the railroad tracks from the world's richest acre, he saw two men supposedly he had told to get out of town and if he saw 'em again he'd kill 'em and he stopped and shot 'em and killed one and wounded the other. Do you know if that really happened?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't.... I never even heard of it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....well did he ever talk about, you know, that he was wanted for 25-30 years in Oklahoma for a killing?

DWIGHT WATSON: No.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Or an incident he had, had in Alice, Texas where he had, had a big shoot out?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, never did, never mentioned it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....did you ever.....he was of course well known for his shooting ability, did you ever see him shoot?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh I saw him shoot.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you describe any of that?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh he was an excellent shot, he....he could put a.....about 25 yards out put a playing card up edgewise and shoot a .45 automatic and split it from the edge you know. I guess the best shot I ever saw.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....you ever been in his house?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah, uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you describe it?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well just kind of.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: It was down here on Martin Street.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah I know where it is, I was just trying to think, he had a.....well I don't remember exactly too much about it. Except you went into the living room and the bedroom was on the right and the kitchen was back in the back. I've been out there when he was in bed you know and talked to him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And.....

DWIGHT WATSON: But I don't remember much about the house.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah.... I understand.....you know he had a lot of guns, did you.....were they present or were they.....?

DWIGHT WATSON: They weren't in sight, no.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you know Juanita very well?

DWIGHT WATSON: I just knew her you know through him, that's all.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I understand she was a....an excellent piano player.

DWIGHT WATSON: I never did know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you know Juanita after Bob died? She didn't live but a short time herself, did you.....?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, they come here and she went away, I didn't ever know what happened.

ROBERT NIEMAN: She died a few months after that herself.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah I heard.....you know I just heard that she died.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....did he ever say.....you know he came down here from Honey Grove, or he was from Honey Grove, and he had Rangered all over a big part of the state. Did he ever say why he stayed in Kilgore, why he settled here?

DWIGHT WATSON: Didn't ever mention it, not to me.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.....did you know of any incidents where he used.....we've said that he didn't like blacks, do you know of any incidences where he had run-ins with them?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, sure don't.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about one that supposedly happened up here close to where Wal-Mart's at now, where he parked his trucks and Nelson Johnson.....?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh the (unintelligible).....you're talking about ?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Uh huh. Where Nelson Johnson I understand had shot someone. Are you familiar with that story?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Could you relate it?

DWIGHT WATSON: All I remember, they stated the boy was stealing gas out there and ah.....a boy shot him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did he kill him?

DWIGHT WATSON: I ah.....yeah, he killed him and we couldn't find no bullet wound until we took him to the undertakers and when they found it, he'd been shot in the mouth and that's really when the.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: What did he shoot him with?

DWIGHT WATSON: It looked like it might of been a .380 or something like that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did Bob go out there?

DWIGHT WATSON: Bob was called, I never didnever did talk to Bob to much about it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you work the crime scene?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well no, I'd go with 'em out there sometimes, with the Deputies back then. That wasn't in the city limits then. I'm trying to think, the boy's name that was supposed to of shot him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Wasn't it Nelson Johnson?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't think it was Nelson, I don't think it was Nelson. Cause it was somebody that the mob had brought up ah.....lived out around Laird Hill.

ROBERT NIEMAN: White man or black man?

DWIGHT WATSON: Black, but I can't remember his name.

ROBERT NIEMAN: About when did that happen?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't remember what year.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well would it of been the '40s or '50s or '60s?

DWIGHT WATSON: Would of been in the '50s I'm sure. But it wasn't Nelson that got accused of it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did old Bob like to hunt or fish?

DWIGHT WATSON: I never did know of him to do either one, I sure didn't.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah.....you ran against him in 1946 as Constable.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, three of us ran.

ROBERT NIEMAN: You and Goss and?

DWIGHT WATSON: Goss and Frank Fuller.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And who won?

DWIGHT WATSON: I did, I beat both of them in '46.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah....did that interfere with you and Goss' relations?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, no, no it didn't interfere. Didn't bother us a bit, we done a lot of things together after that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did Bob ever talk about his family?

DWIGHT WATSON: Never.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I just wondered, he had no children, did he ever?

DWIGHT WATSON: No he never did talk to me about his family at all.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....during his latter years, did you stay in contact with him?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well not real close, I'd see him pretty often, but just kind of visiting some, I'd visit with him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I understand he may not of.....that he liked to chew tobacco.

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah, he chewed tobacco.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And that he wasn't the cleanest person in the world with it.

DWIGHT WATSON: He'd get it all over his shirt, yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And his car?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, especially after he drank that beer you know. After lunch every day he had to have a nap after that you know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Oh he would?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh yeah, he....he'd go down and park in front of his office, sit out in the car and rare back and take a nap.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I didn't know that.

DWIGHT WATSON: He did that nearly every day.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well where was his office?

DWIGHT WATSON: It was there on the (unintelligible)....., right down there on the ..(unintelligible)....it's about a block down on the right down there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well Bob worked ah.....for the ah.....State Game and Wildlife and Oyster Commission was it?

DWIGHT WATSON: That's what.....we just called him a game warden you know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what were his duties, he wasn't a game warden as we would think of today.

DWIGHT WATSON: We always thought he was in charge of the pollution, like in salt water and oil and stuff in these streams, that's what we thought, or what I thought.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what did he do?

DWIGHT WATSON: Huh?

ROBERT NIEMAN: What would he do?

DWIGHT WATSON: What do you mean?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well I mean he would go out to investigate pollution's?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, oh yeah, oil leaks and salt water getting in the streams and things.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did he ever mention, you know he came from an extremely wealthy family, did he ever talk aboutand he obviously had no real need for money.

DWIGHT WATSON: He never did mention it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did ah.....you attend his funeral?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: In Honey Grove or?

DWIGHT WATSON: In Honey Grove, yeah. Me and Glenn Elliott went up there.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did you ride up with Glenn?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well let's talk more about your law enforcement, or your own career.

Ah.....

DWIGHT WATSON: Mine's kind of shady.

ROBERT NIEMAN: How do you figure that?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well I resigned in '80, I was a Constable up until '80 and I resigned in '80.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did you serve continuously from '46 to '80?

DWIGHT WATSON: Uh hum.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well that's a pretty good distinguished career, 34 years.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, I got two, two or three appointments.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Any particular stories that you ah.....that would of been during the Welch years when he had all his problems.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, (unintelligible).....right along with it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.....you must of worked with Glenn a lot.

DWIGHT WATSON: Well yeah, I've known Glenn ever since he was a Highway Patrolman.

ROBERT NIEMAN: What about Lloyd Webb?

DWIGHT WATSON: Oh lord yeah, Lloyd Webb. (Unintelligible)..... I think.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Slick Alfred, came he, he's the sheriff down at Athens now.

DWIGHT WATSON: You see back then Constables was different than they are now. Back then Constables kind of had their own community, you know, he would run his own community.

Right now they don't do nothing but serve papers, I don't think they enforce the law now,

(unintelligible)..... I don't think. But back in my time we worked all them honky tonks.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well where was your area?

DWIGHT WATSON: When I first started out it was Precinct 6, and then later on they changed it down to four precincts and that made my precinct 4.

ROBERT NIEMAN: And what area did that cover?

DWIGHT WATSON: Back then it was Kilgore and Alto, Easton, out at the airport and just a little ways out towards..... on 31 out there about around (unintelligible).....county.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you get Danton?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, Danton's in the (unintelligible).....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you....was you involved in the KFC? Kentucky Fried Chicken.....?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, no that was after, I was out of office when that happened.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay. What about old Charles Robert Mathis? Old thief that Glenn ended up killing over in Dallas.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah I I never had nothing to do with that.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Any other stories anything that you can tell us on yourself or Goss?

DWIGHT WATSON: Well, me and Goss both we liked to gamble a little bit, shoot craps. Wasn't nothing around here so we'd go over to Bossier City and there's a place over there called the Green Door and we used to go over there maybe once or twice a month. And we'd win or lose and one time we was loosing over there and Bob said, "Well I think I sold my gun", and said, "We get a little more maybe we can catch up", and I said, "Okay". So he come in with a little money and divided it with me and we shot it and lost all that. And we started to leave and I told Bob, I said..... I looked under the seat and I said, "My gun's gone". He said, "Your gun's gone", and I said, "Yeah". He just kept driving and whistling and I said, "Wait a minute, I'm serious". He said, "Well I know where your gun is". I said, "Well where is it". He said, "Well in

the first place, I need mine and in the second place, yours is prettier than mine and I got more for it". So he.....when we got home he loaned me a gun until I went back and got mine.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Until you went back and got it?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did he like to pull practical jokes, or was that just a?

DWIGHT WATSON: That was just one of them things. And one time up.....when he was a policeman upChief of Police up here well this old boy namedhe called him Sailor, had an artificial leg and he'd come around you know and bump people on the leg and say, "You got your boots on". And one day he caught Bob out of sorts or something and he walked up to Bob and kicked him and said, "How about your boots". And Bob jerked his pistol out and shot that artificial leg off.

ROBERT NIEMAN: He didn't kick him anymore did he?

DWIGHT WATSON: No, that's all he kicked. I think the city bought the boy another leg.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was this when Bob was Chief of Police that he did this?

DWIGHT WATSON: That's when he was Chief of Police, yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well did ah.....I've heard stories that ah.....he would drink that beer in that metal malt can until he'd see his wife Juanita coming and then he'd want to get rid of it real fast.

DWIGHT WATSON: He didn't drink around her, no.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well what have you been doing since ah.....you ah.....been out.....resigned?

DWIGHT WATSON: I worked for East Texas Lumber down here, Sonny Spradlin's son Ronnie, I've been working for them.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well anything else you'd like to add?

DWIGHT WATSON: That's about it I guess. About all I know.

ROBERT NIEMAN: We're talking to Mrs. Dwight Watson, Mrs. Watson you worked ah.....we're visiting on Glenn Elliott's first murder case he ever worked was in Longview in 1950, where these two former partners had got into a fight and this happened in the wee hours of the morning. And Glenn said that he gothe was at a stop.....he was going off duty, he was a Highway Patrolman, and he was at the stop light, he was headed for the old Hollywood Cafe which is there where Bank One is at now on Tyler Street. And a guy come running.....ah.....driving up to him and said there's two men fighting and one of them is killing the other, down here in front of where the Texas Furniture is at now. Ah.... I don't remember the name of the cafe was then, but

THELMA WATSON: I don't know, I don't remember myself.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah....but anyway.....

THELMA WATSON: But that's where it was.

ROBERT NIEMAN:The Elite, the Elite Cafe, that was the name of it. Anyway, Glenn said he took off down there and as he pulled up one man was on his knees, or was kneeling over and the other one was stabbing him, he'd stabbed him forty something times. And Glenn said that he turned and he started running up the stairs and Glenn grabbed him and the guy fell on his knife. And Glenn said that to this day he tried to commit suicide, but he didn't, and Glenn clubbed him and he drug him down the stairs and about that time the Chief of Police, well he would later become Chief of Police, Roy Stone.....

THELMA WATSON: Roy Stone, uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN:and his partner come up and they apprehended the guy and that. But I understand that you worked for these men here in Kilgore when they had a cafe here.

THELMA WATSON: Right.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Would you kind of fill us in on some background.

THELMA WATSON: Well ah.... I went to work for 'em, well Nick andand Nick Georgepul and Mose, and I can't recall his last name.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I've got it but I can't pronounce it.

THELMA WATSON: Ah.....anyway they.....they were a partnership.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well where was the cafe here in Kilgore?

THELMA WATSON: It was on East Main Street, I think there's a video place there now.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, Boom Town.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Boom Town?

THELMA WATSON: And it was.....uh huh. And ah.....they just had all most the same customers every day, you know they cooked a lot of just good Greek food and highly seasoned.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Were both of them Greek?

THELMA WATSON: Mose I believe was Syrian.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Okay.

THELMA WATSON: But Nick was Greek and was from the.....he always said the old country, he wrote and read Greek. He married an American woman and had two children and they lived here in Kilgore. One of them worked for a Dr. Graves, an optometrist here and the other one worked at ah.....their son worked for the Country Tavern, ran it for awhile, place out on Tyler highway. Ah.....Mose drank quite a bit, because he worked the night shift and it would be quiet and he would drink a lot and just go off and leave the place open. Anyway, they had problems coming from the partnership and Mose always thought he was getting cheated out of part of his money. And it came out at the trial that he thought I was..... I was doing their books, and he

thought I was leaning towards Nick, which was not true. But they did split their partnership up and I I don't remember where Mose went after that, but Nick went.....took the cafe in Longview where he later was killed. And that's all I remember about it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well do you remember.....what was Mose's sentence, you do remember?

THELMA WATSON: No I don't. Ah.....he I remember he cooked in the jail in Longview, the county jail a long time, I don't think he went off to prison.

DWIGHT WATSON: No he went and died of a heart attack.

THELMA WATSON: Yeah, and he died there as he was.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: At the city jail?

DWIGHT WATSON: No.

ROBERT NIEMAN: The county jail?

THELMA WATSON: The county jail.

DWIGHT WATSON: No.

THELMA WATSON: Huh?

DWIGHT WATSON: He went to the penitentiary.

THELMA WATSON: Did he? I didn't recall him going.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Huntsville?

DWIGHT WATSON: I don't remember (unintelligible).....he went to the penitentiary and died of a heart attack.

THELMA WATSON: Well I sure thought he died in Longview.

DWIGHT WATSON: No.

THELMA WATSON: It's been a long time.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well let me ask you then ah.....following up on this, you worked there at the cafe here in Kilgore.

THELMA WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Did you know old Goss, Bob Goss?

THELMA WATSON: Oh yeah, yeah, everybody knows Bob Goss, yeah I did.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Was he polite when he'd come in or was he a loud mouth or?

THELMA WATSON: No, he always was very polite around me. He'd always tell me some long story every time he'd come in and drink a cup of coffee well he had a story to tell me. A lot of them involved my husband.

ROBERT NIEMAN: We didn't mention any of those. Did he ever talk about his early days, like when he was up at Borger or early days.....?

THELMA WATSON: He told me about when ah.....yeah he told me about some of the things that happened to him, but it's been so long until I don't recall. Ah.....he was involved some way with ah.....ah.....Gonzaullas?

ROBERT NIEMAN: Yeah, Lone Wolfe Gonzaullas.

THELMA WATSON: Lone Wolfe Gonzaullas.

ROBERT NIEMAN: He was called Shadow Goss, and I suspect he kind of resented that.

THELMA WATSON: And he was his body guard or something. And sometimes he'd tellyou know, he'd tell us things like that. But I I don't remember much about it.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well you've been a big help.

THELMA WATSON: I wish I could remember Mose's last name.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I've got it written down, I found the newspaper article on it.

THELMA WATSON: I want to say it started with a.....it was a long name started with an S, but I may be wrong.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Ah.....no, I don't have that folder with me. I've got it, I've got a copy of the newspaper article.

THELMA WATSON: I believe Johnny Georgepul has some children that live here, doesn't he.

DWIGHT WATSON: I think so, I'm not real sure. That's Nick's son.

THELMA WATSON: That's Nick's son.

DWIGHT WATSON: But he died.

THELMA WATSON: His grandchildren, now the son died, but I believe he has some grandchildren that live here, but I don't know. They would be grown now.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, he had one son I know.

THELMA WATSON: Yeah.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well that was a particularly gruesome killing, because like I said, Glenn said he stabbed him forty something times.

DWIGHT WATSON: Killed him.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Had a 10 1/2" boning knife.

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah.

THELMA WATSON: That's terrible cause Nick was a good old Greek, he was.

DWIGHT WATSON: That cafe was Nick the Greek's?

THELMA WATSON: Nick the Greek, uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Here in Kilgore?

DWIGHT WATSON: Yeah, name of the cafe.

ROBERT NIEMAN: I think in Longview he called it the Elite.

THELMA WATSON: The Elite, uh huh. I had eaten.....

ROBERT NIEMAN: Like I said, it was right there where Texas Furniture is at today.

THELMA WATSON: The day that he got killed, that night, I had been in Longview shopping and I had gone over and eaten with Nick at lunch time, so it was real hard that night when I heard that I think you called and told me he'd just killed.....

DWIGHT WATSON: Probably, I don't remember.

ROBERT NIEMAN: That happened in the wee hours like, you know, twelve, one, two o'clock that morning.

THELMA WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Cause you know Glenn said he was going off duty, and he was going out to the Hollywood Cafe which is, you know where that Tyler Street entrance to Bank One is at today?

THELMA WATSON: Uh huh.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Well he said right in there was where that.....

DWIGHT WATSON: Used to be a picture show across the street.

THELMA WATSON: Ah.....(unintelligible).....

DWIGHT WATSON: Well might of been.

THELMA WATSON: Yeah, things have changed a lot since those days.

ROBERT NIEMAN: Just a little.

THELMA WATSON: They really have.